

Resolution to Free Jason Puracal

WHEREAS Jason Puracal, a U.S. citizen and University of Washington graduate with degrees in economics and zoology, volunteered for the Peace Corps in 2002 and was assigned to Nicaragua, where he developed community gardens and taught local women to preserve food; and

WHEREAS Jason developed great affection for Nicaragua and its people and chose to stay there when he left the Peace Corps in 2004, whereupon he found work as a commissioned agent for a *RE/Max* real estate office in San Juan del Sur, partnered with three other Americans in *RE/MAX* Horizons, becoming a well-regarded member of the community and marrying a young Nicaraguan woman with whom he now has a four year-old son; and

WHEREAS on November 11, 2010, Jason was arrested in his office by masked police, his computers and files were seized with no search warrant, following which his home (occupied at the time by his son and his mother visiting from Tacoma, WA) was raided and, despite an absence of incriminating evidence, he was thrown into Nicaragua's notorious Modelo Prison where he remains, a full year later, consistently denied due process of law; and

WHEREAS Jason, along with 10 Nicaraguan nationals (one of whom was running for mayor against the Sandinista government's candidate), was charged with international drug trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime, matters of which he was and is totally innocent; and

WHEREAS, during the ten months spent by the prosecution in attempting to gather evidence for a trial, Jason was subjected to Modelo Prison's sub-human conditions, beaten and drugged, and denied legal counsel and medical care, even for 2nd degree burns and a life-threatening infection; and

WHEREAS, when Jason was finally brought to trial in, August 2011, no evidence of drugs or money transactions was presented, the prosecution's own case effectively proved that he did not commit the offenses charged, and the other defendants all confirmed that Jason was unknown to them before the arrest; and

WHEREAS, despite these facts, a Sandinista judge declared him guilty, sentenced him to 22 years in a Nicaraguan prison, and employed an arcane procedural tactic to delay indefinitely his opportunity to file an appeal; and

WHEREAS an April 8, 2011 U.S. report on human rights violations documented the corruption and incompetence of Nicaraguan authorities, and five police officers in the specific area where Jason's trial took place were recently suspended for corruption in drug trafficking cases;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we call upon Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, our Congressional representatives, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Obama, to support Jason Puracal and his family and press for his release.

Adopted November 22, 2011 by King County Democratic Central Committee

Submitted by Robert Loeliger, rloeliger@aol.com;

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See also www.freejasonp.com