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daily nebraskan

Terrorists . .

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THE PUERTO RICANS never applied for the commutations Carter gave them last week. They had even refused to apply for the parole for which they were eligible, on the grounds that to do so would be to recognize U.S. sovereignty over Puerto Rico." (The administration denies reports that the commutations are a part of a prisoner swap with Fidel Castro for four Americans held in Cuba.)

But that isn't the end of it. Applications for pardon, commutation and parole routinely include evidence of rehabilitation and remorse. The Puerto Ricans make clear that they aren't sorry for what they did.

ANDRES FIGUEROA CORDERO, who also was convicted in the Truman assassination attempt, died of cancer last March, but he already had been released because of his terminal illness. He remained unrepentant until the end, having told a reporter in June, 1978, that he "would do it a million times if I had to."

Not only is Waymon Cunningham repentant. He is, by the accounts of nearly everyone who knows him-including me-thoroughly rehabilitated.

His two applications for presidential commutation of his life-plus-43 years' sentence were accompanied by a sheaf of letters from members of Congress, community leaders; the director of the prison system, judges and other pillars of Washington society, all urging his release.

CUNNINGHAM, NOW 45, was temporarily excluded from Galiber's special program under new, more stringent rules set down by former Attorney General William Saxbe.

He was reinstated after he risked his own life to save the life of a young fellow-inmate during a prison riot. He has served 16 years.

I don't know whether or when the Puerto Ricans might strike again. But I don't worry for one minute about Waymon Cunningham. You and I constitute more of a menace to society.

The Carter administration has received 1,068 applications for pardons and 790 applications (including Cunningham's) for commutation. It has granted 302 pardons and 14 commutations, including those of the four Puerto Ricans. But not Cunningham's.

Cunningham doesn't understand why. And I don't know either.

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