



Written by [Gary Benoit](#) on January 19, 2009

Former Border Patrol Agents to be Released

President Bush's commutation should see the men released on or about March 20. Both men are from El Paso, Texas. Ramos is being held in the federal correctional institution in Phoenix while Compean is currently held in Lisbon, Ohio. Once released, they will have served nearly two years of their 11- and 10-year sentences, respectfully.



Commutation is not the same as being pardoned, as some mainstream news outlets [such as USA Today](#) are reporting. Pardoning would erase the crimes from a person's record, but not commutation, which focuses mainly on reducing a person's sentence. Ramos and Compean will be able to go home to their families but will still be convicted felons.

Our printed magazine covered the case in-depth with the article "Punished for Doing Their Job" in the February 19, 2007 issue. The magazine has had follow-up articles since then, mainly posted online. *America's Most Wanted*, the successful TV show hosted by John Walsh, cites *The New American* as a source for their staff.

The former Border Patrol agents were convicted of wrongfully shooting a drug smuggler attempting to cross into the United States.

[The New American had previously reported](#) that the drug smuggler, Osvaldo Aldrete-Davila, was in the act of transporting one million dollars' worth of marijuana when he was intercepted by the two agents. After a physical altercation, Ramos believed the man was about to shoot him, and he fired. One of his bullets hit the fleeing smuggler in the buttocks, but the smuggler appeared unscathed to the officers. Aldrete-Davila escaped across the border, not seriously hurt. U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton charged the two men with acting without supervisor approval, moving spent shell casings, and not properly reporting that they had fired shots at a suspect.

The convictions of Ramos and Compean have been questioned by many who insist that jurors were not informed of Aldrete-Davila's continued drug trafficking and were not told that the Border Patrol agent who testified against the two men was a lifelong friend of the smuggler. Several jurors claim they were pressured to render a guilty verdict.

For the Ramos and Compean families, President Bush's commutation signals an eventual end to the nightmare and a beginning to a long-overdue reunion. March 20 will not come quick enough for those involved. Future birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays can be spent as a family.

The photo shows Jose Compean and his wife; it was taken by Sam Antonio.



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