

Jurors View Photos In Spy Trial

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Prosecutors continued laying groundwork in the Cuban spy trial Tuesday, showing jurors items confiscated from some of the defendants' apartments - including photographs that appeared to show Fidel Castro.

The photos were among a group the FBI seized from suspect Rene Gonzalez's Kendall home Sept. 12, 1998. Also confiscated were group photos taken at a Brothers to the Rescue gathering.

Chicago-born Gonzalez, 44, moved to Cuba in the 1950s, but returned to the United States in 1990. He flew missions for Brothers to the Rescue for several years, becoming close to Juan Pablo Roque, the pilot and double agent believed to have helped facilitate the shutdown that killed four Brothers fliers.

Philip Horowitz, Gonzalez's attorney, suggested that one of the photos in his client's apartment showed not a live person, but a "wax figure" in a Havana museum.

Neither he nor Assistant U.S. Attorney John Kaskrenakas ever said the words "Fidel Castro" when discussing the photos, which were shown to jurors and displayed - in original form and blow-ups - on several courtroom monitors. The significance of the pictures also was not explained.

Prosecutors declined a request by The Herald to review the photos, which were entered into evidence. U.S. District Judge Joan Lenard set a 4 p.m. Thursday hearing on the newspaper's request for access to evidence as the trial unfolds.

FBI agents also found a handwritten list of apparent airplane tail numbers in Gonzalez's apartment at 8000 SW 149th Ave., Apt. A403. They included N-2506 - the Cessna flown by Brothers to the Rescue leader Jose Basulto.

Basulto was in that plane Feb. 24, 1996, when a Cuban MiG blasted two other Brothers planes from the sky over the Florida Straits. Prosecutors allege Gonzalez and Roque received warnings from Cuban intelligence forces only days earlier telling them not to fly with the rescue group that day.

Codefendant Gerardo Hernandez is charged with conspiring to murder the Brothers fliers - the most serious charge of the case.

Fourteen people were indicted as alleged members of the so-called Wasp Network, La Red Avispa, and accused of monitoring U.S. military installations and Cuban exile groups.

The defendants all acknowledge they were working for the Cuban government, but deny having passed on classified information or having any intent to harm U.S. interests.

Lawyer Horowitz downplayed the discovery of a business card for U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Miami, in Gonzalez's apartment. Prosecutors claim Gonzalez, to

further his spying, sought the congresswoman's help in getting his wife into the United States. But there was no testimony that Ros-Lehtinen assisted him.

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