

Jury Selection Starts In Cuban Spy Case

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MIAMI

Jury selection began Monday for the federal trial of five Cubans accused of spying on U.S. military installations for the Cuban government. District Judge Joan A. Lenard is presiding at the trial.

Seventy-two people were interviewed in the case against Gerardo Hernandez, a k a Manuel Viramontes; John Doe II, a k a Luis Medina; John Doe III, a k a Ruben Campa; Antonio Guerrero; and Rene Gonzalez. The selection process is expected to last seven days, Lenard said, and the 235-person jury pool should be whittled to 100 by Wednesday.

Three defendants could face life in prison if convicted of espionage conspiracy, and the other two face 15 years if convicted of conspiracy and serving as unregistered foreign agents.

SOUTH FLORIDA

Brigade 2506 rejects Havana's invitation

The Bay of Pigs Veterans Association, better known as Brigade 2506, on Monday repudiated an invitation made by Havana to Cubans abroad to attend a conference marking the 40th anniversary of the failed invasion attempt.

"Our position is firm and united: intransigence in the face of Fidel Castro's dictatorial regime," said Juan Perez Franco, president of the 2,000-member group.

Perez dismissed as "opportunistic and fallacious" the interest shown by Cuban authorities in staging the event. Last week, Cuban Vice President Jose Ramon Fernandez announced that his government has scheduled the conference for March. The raid occurred April 17-19, 1961.

Fernandez, who led the Cuban forces that defeated the U.S.-supported raiders, said the purpose of the meeting is not for his side to gloat but for the participants to reflect on the landing and review it in detail. He guaranteed complete safety for any exile who attends.

Miami lawyer Alfredo Duran, a Bay of Pigs veteran, said he "would definitely go" if Havana invites him.

ELSEWHERE

Wheels turning to get boy back from Cuba

Cuban officials on Monday were receptive to a request for help by a Homestead man seeking the return to Florida of his 5-year-old son, Jonathon, of Key Largo, according to the father's attorney.

"They were very helpful and said they would handle this matter expeditiously, privately and legally," said Michael Berry, who represents Jon Colombini. Both men

flew to Washington, D.C., to meet with Cuban Interests Section officials.

The boy was spirited to the island by his mother without his father's permission earlier this month.

One possible resolution discussed is that Colombini, 31, be allowed to travel to Cuba in the near future, the attorney said. ``It's one of the options being considered, but we're not saying that it would be to bring the boy back. That's too premature."

A spokesman for the interests section did not return a telephone call.

While in Washington, Colombini also met with State Department officials, who have been aiding him in his efforts. On Nov. 12, American-born Jonathon was taken to the island by his Cuba-born mother and Colombini's ex-wife, Arletis Blanco, 29, of Key Largo.

SOUTH MIAMI-DADE

Child recovering from blow to the head

A 6-year-old girl was airlifted to Miami Children's Hospital on Monday afternoon after suffering a seizure in her home in South Dade, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue said.

The girl, Emmie Davis, was accidentally hit in the head about 5 p.m. by the elbow of her mother, who was pulling a child's seat out of the car, said Cindy Davis, the girl's grandmother. The force of the blow sent Emmie into convulsions and she stopped breathing for two to three minutes, Davis said.

Though her mother, Vickie, was frantic when she called Fire Rescue to her home in the 14400 block of Southwest 293rd Street, the girl had stabilized by the time emergency workers arrived, said Lt. Roman Bas, a Fire Rescue spokesman.

A Miami Children's spokeswoman said the girl was fine Monday night and would be admitted for observation.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Police find dead body lying in road

Miami-Dade Police discovered a dead man lying on the road at 3400 NW 31st St. after responding to a call Monday about a possible hit-and-run involving a pedestrian. But when they arrived at 6 p.m., police found the man had been shot to death.

Some witnesses told police they saw a red van. Anyone with information is asked to call 305-471-8477.

MARATHON

Plan to protect Dry Tortugas due for release

A final draft of a plan that would ban fishing and diving in waters near the Dry Tortugas will be released to the public today by Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Staff members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees the massive Keys sanctuary, are distributing the final draft of a management proposal for the Tortugas Ecological Reserves that includes the

sanctuary's response to some 4,000 public comments and a socioeconomic assessment of the reserves' effect on the local marine community.

Following a press conference today unveiling the finalized draft plan, the proposal will be available to the public on the Internet at www.fknms.noaa.gov. Printed copies of the plan also will be available later this week and can be obtained free by calling the sanctuary at 305-743-2437.

STATEWIDE

Four winners to collect nearly \$30,000

Four first-prize winners of the ``Fantasy 5'' game will collect \$29,995.87 each, the Florida Lottery said Monday. The winning tickets were bought in Miami, Miami Beach, Plant City and Wabasso, lottery officials reported.

Another 637 tickets won \$31 for correctly picking four of five, and 13,035 tickets won \$4.50 for picking three of five. The numbers drawn Sunday night were 2-3-19-24-26.

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