

The prosecution fears Cuban control in spy trial "Cuba is preparing a fabricated version of the facts"

Translated from original Spanish

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The Cuban government is trying to influence the ongoing trial against five alleged spies, by presenting a "fabricated version" in an attempt to close the case, said the Miami-based head prosecutor yesterday.

"Cuba is constructing a fabricated version of the facts", said Miller in an appearance before judge Lenard's tribunal.

Counselor Paul McKenna revealed yesterday that Cuban authorities recovered a video camera bag a mere 18 hours after the Hermanos al Rescate planes went down, on February 24 1996. Said bag was found 9.3 miles off the Cuban coast.

"In spite of existent public perception, the process to secure cooperation from the Cuban government has been slow and unproductive. Affirmed, McKenna who serves as council for defendant Gerardo Hernandez.

McKenna and representatives for the prosecution have been cleared to travel to Cuba for a second time to interview three new witnesses who might shed new light on how the planes were shot down.

"The interests of justice and due process justify this trip", asserted McKenna responding to the objections raised by the prosecution.

According to McKenna the evidence and testimonies compiled will be key in deciding if the Hermanos al Rescate planes crossed into Cuban airspace.

The bag containing a camera charger and two navigation charts might belong to Mario de la Pena's Cessna.

The three witnessed that are to be filmed in Cuba are; the border and customs officer that found the bag, the radar operator that traced the course of the planes, and the director for the Cuban Oceanographic Institute.

The oceanographer conducted a study on the marine currents present in northern Cuba and concluded that the bag came from a location in the southeast were the Cessna might have been shot down.

Yesterday's proceedings ended with the recorded testimony of two Cuban air controllers. These recordings have been necessary since Cuban nationals have expressed fear to travel to Miami in order to testify.

The new recording might serve as closing arguments for the defense.