

## **Spies Characterized as 'Protectors' of the U.S.**

**El Nuevo Herald-June 1, 2001**

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Defense lawyers for the trial of five alleged Cuban spies strongly attacked the prosecution's strategy, and turned up the tone of their clients attributes, calling them "pacifists", agents with an "immortal mission", "protectors of the policy and laws of the United States" and again, "patriots".

On the third day of closing arguments in a Miami federal court, lawyers Philip Horowitz, William Norris and Jack Blumenfeld took to the stage to question the prosecution's indictment and to assure that the accused never sought nor obtained secret information. Horowitz, who represents the accused Rene Gonzalez, said that there was great confusion surrounding the case, citing the "violent actions" of exile groups as the principal motivation for the Wasp Network members, which was disbanded in 1998.

According to Horowitz, Gonzalez's mission – indicted on charges of espionage – "is immortal".

"The mission is peace, not to get a piece of Cuba" emphasized the lawyer. "Defending the right to remain free from invasion from the 'internationally isolated island' that Miami –Dade County has become.

Horowitz concluded his 50-minute intervention by asserting that there was no evidence to convict Gonzalez, and characterized activists such as Jose Basulto, president of Brothers to the Rescue, and Ramon Saul Sanchez, leader of the Democracy Movement, as provocateurs.

Norris's arguments in defense of the accused Ramon Labanino, whose alias is Luis Medina, took the same path.

"The nature of the information obtained [by Labañino] is public and not harmful to national security" declared Norris before the 12 jurors. "There is no secondary market for that information."

The lawyer justified the use of a false identity by Labañino on United States territory "to not endanger his family in Cuba" and he asked: "If the FBI sends one of its agents to investigate the mafia, don't they protect their identity?"

Norris insisted on his client's innocence and said Labañino's task – commissioned with defendant Antonio Guerrero to monitor military installations in southern Florida – was in fact "protecting the laws and policy established by the United States."

Then it was Blumenfeld's turn, who tried to ridicule the prosecution's allegations against his client, Antonio Guerrero.

"The prosecution has used David Copperfield's approach to the case" mocked Blumenfeld. "They [the prosecution] pulled out a lot of things to create panic and make you believe that they are more than they are". He added that at the Boca Chica Base where Guerrero worked for more than five years, secret information

didn't exist, and recalled that a sign existed in the area permitting photographs to be taken.

Blumenfeld insisted that Guerrero never transmitted United States military secrets to Cuba, and assured that it was about "a patriot who sacrificed himself for his country".

Blumenfeld concluded his long argument with a quote of the Cuban independence hero Jose Marti (1853-1895).

Today, the attorney Paul McKenna will speak, defender of the accused and leader of the Wasp Network, Gerardo Gonzalez [*sic*-Hernandez].

Edition: EDITION: Final  
Section: SECTION: Panorama  
Page: PAGE: 15A

Record Number: 0106060054  
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