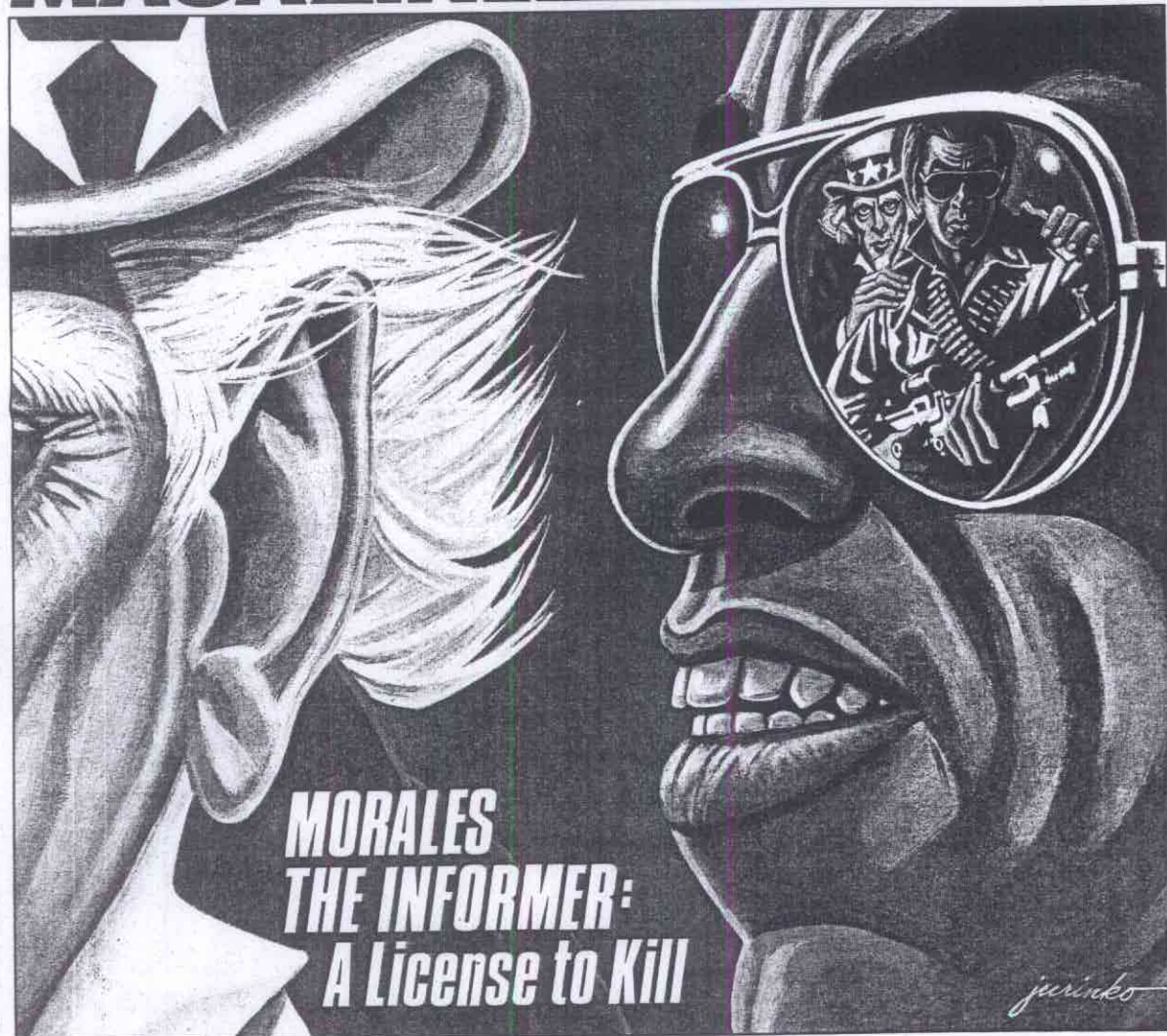


# THE NEWSDAY MAGAZINE



The Dream That  
Greg Launched  
From His Backyard

June 20, 1982





# THE ULTIMATE

By John Cummings

**A**MONG the old men who play chess at the outdoor tables that line the main street of Miami's "Little Havana," Ricardo Morales is a man often talked about in whispers. Mostly they talk about the day Morales waited in a car outside an apartment building

on Flagler Street, in the heart of the Cuban section. Cradled under his arm was an M-3 submachine gun, a .45-cal. weapon with a silencer. Possession of such a weapon is a felony all by itself. Morales saw his target,

*John Cummings is a Newsday staff writer.*

another Cuban exile named Aton Costanza, emerge from the apartment building and get into his car. Morales had his driver cut off Costanza's vehicle and, in broad daylight, fired at him at close range. Morales says he fired a total of 17 slugs into Costanza's chest, and then Morales' driver pulled slowly away. A backup car followed Morales from the neighborhood.

Miraculously, Costanza survived. It is almost as surprising — unless one really knows about Morales — that he was never arrested. The incident never made the Miami newspapers. And Costanza never filed any charges.

Little Havana still hums about that day, Nov. 22, 1968. But to Morales himself, the escapade was nothing more than "just another day at the office."

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Ricardo Morales, though never convicted, has admitted committing

more crimes than the many people he has informed on. In sworn testimony, he admitted murdering one man and trying to murder another. He also has admitted supplying the explosives for a bomb that destroyed a Cuban airliner as it was taking off from Barbados in 1976. All 73 aboard the plane, which Morales shrugs off as "a Communist air force plane," died when it crashed into the ocean.

How has Morales done all this with impunity? As an informant, spy and enforcer, he has worked for the right people — and was schooled in sabotage and explosives by the CIA, in deceit by the FBI and in crime by the underworld. Without informants, the system that informants serve — sometimes called justice — would wither and die and police and other civil servants would be out of business.

Known as El Mono (literally meaning "monkey" in Spanish, but

Needed by a variety of government agencies for the information he can provide them, Ricardo Morales has been sheltered from the consequences of his crimes. That has given him, in effect, a license to sell drugs — and even to kill.





# INFORMER:



also a derogatory term approximating "cop"), Morales has become a legend both as a spy and an informer. But most of all he is a survivor, a man who will turn on anyone — friend or foe — when cornered. Danger is as much a stimulant to him as the cocaine he snorts and trafficks in. Traveling for long in his company is akin to taking a dip with a great white shark.

And this shark is biting. For the past year, Morales has been the state's star witness in a major narcotics case in Miami, a case involving some of the biggest and most notorious people in the Cuban exile community.

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The Mutiny is a hotel in Miami's Coconut Grove area, facing Biscayne Bay, overlooking boats of every size and shape at the Dinner Key Marina, two blocks from Miami's City Hall.

Viewed from the plush, black

leather seats near the hotel's large windows, the scene could easily have been the inspiration for "Moon Over Miami."

Slim and shapely hostesses, all dressed in gowns that appear to be designer originals and wearing floppy picture hats, glide between the tables.

It is the fashionable address for the "in" tourists who really know Miami. The hotel's members-only club, only a short distance from Little Havana, is the meeting place and watering hole for Latinos and Anglos on both sides of the law, for rags-to-riches businessmen who seem to be one thing but often are something else.

It is here, on any given evening, that you are likely to find the 42-year-old Ricardo Morales Navarrete, always well-dressed, always with a Browning automatic tucked under his jacket. Here Morales sips Johnnie Walker Black continuously,

puffs on joints and, for off-premises consumption, offers snorts of cocaine "when I can get it." His drug diet also includes Valium "when needed."

A man with dark, penetrating eyes, broad shoulders and the agility of his nickname, he has been referred to as 200 pounds of cunning and guile, a man of mercurial moods who once yanked a reporter's tape recorder from his briefcase and then placed it on a table with his automatic pistol next to it. He can smile and threaten you at the same time.

He once remarked about his life on the precipice: "I don't play to win or lose. I just play to stay in the game."

Morales is, in short, a product of life in Miami in the '60s and '70s — a city that became what Lisbon and Casablanca were to the 1940s; a city that became to cocaine what Marseilles was to heroin; the Western Hemisphere's equivalent of

Beirut and Belfast, where terrorists and bombers are found in every bodega. Miami is a city with more than its share of con men, corrupt politicians, secret agents, drug traffickers and money launderers.

In a city like that, there is more than a normal demand for informers, spies and enforcers, and Morales has whispered into the ears of everyone: the FBI, the CIA, the Drug Enforcement Administration, Customs Service, Internal Revenue Service, the Dade Metro Police Department and the City of Miami police force. And it runs full circle. Each agency has its informers who, in turn, inform on other informers who are working for other agencies and who probably are informing on them. And with the informers' "credentials" often comes a license to steal and sometimes, as in Morales' case, to kill.

Morales has become the visible

# LICENSE TO KILL



*macho* symbol of the intrigue and terror that has become the Miami that the tourist never sees.

Cubans began flooding Miami in the early 1960s, but only, they thought, long enough to arm themselves and return to Cuba. Fidel Castro and the Bay of Pigs changed all that in 1961.

So instead of taking over Cuba, they have taken over south Florida. The majority of Cubans, hard-working and honest, have built a new life and hold the balance of political power.

But they have refused to be absorbed as have other waves of immigrants, and, instead, have created their own society that resembles old Havana more than it does Tallahassee, Jacksonville or Atlanta. There are nearly 200,000 Cubans in the city of Miami, which has a total population of 350,000. And that doesn't include the more than 100,000 Cubans who recently arrived aboard the Mariel boatlift and the thousands of Colombians, Nicaraguans, Haitians and Panamanians who make their home there, both legally and illegally.

The sheer number of immigrants would have changed south Florida — but it was largely the federal gov-

ernment's machinations that molded the Cubans into instruments of violence, crime and intrigue.

In the '60s, the CIA trained thousands of young Cubans in the use of weapons and explosives for guerrilla warfare in what was called the "silent war" against Fidel Castro. When Lyndon Johnson shut down the CIA operations in Miami in 1967, many highly trained killers were left with nothing to do except to seek jobs as laborers.

And as the 1970s dawned, they turned to a new trade, importing drugs. Sniffing cocaine had been an accepted practice in old Cuba, as acceptable as extramarital activity as long as it was not carried too far. When the Cubans came to Miami, the Anglos found the habit fascinating, and soon the new arrivals, in turn, found that there was a lot of profit to be made in supplying what the locals wanted.

That trade didn't stop in Miami, and soon fortunes were being made in nationwide distribution rings run out of what the disc jockeys in Miami call "the magic city." Billions in untaxed dollars flowed into Miami banks and offshore accounts. Small businessmen became millionaires overnight. The exiles learned

that what they could not do for their country, they could do for themselves. And an epidemic of cocaine and marijuana began to flood the south of Florida and, through that conduit, the rest of America.

Federal law enforcement, though probably the last to discover it, was fascinated when "Operation Eagle" — a vast sweep against cocaine traffickers in 1970 — showed that 70 percent of the suspects arrested had been members of the CIA-trained Bay of Pigs brigade. The members of Brigade 2506 had invaded Cuba, only to surrender on the beaches to superior forces and spend 20 months in prison before they were ransomed by the Kennedy administration in 1962.

Morales was not in Brigade 2506. One reason, said an intelligence source, was that the brigade's political leadership, made up of prominent Cuban exiles, disliked him. When Morales left Cuba in 1960, the brigade was in its early stages of formation.

"They felt he was too recently out of Cuba and they didn't like his association with the G-2 [the Cuban secret, or political, police]. And the agency [CIA] had other uses for

him." The source did not elaborate.

Born in 1939 in Havana to upper middle class parents (his father and grandfather both had been chief judges of Havana Province), Morales attended the University of Havana during the tumultuous period of the late 1950s, when Fidel Castro was waging his war in the mountains against then-President Fulgencio Batista.

Morales was an avid admirer of Castro and formed an underground rebel unit at the university. After Castro's forces entered Havana on New Year's Day in 1959, Morales became a member of DIER, the acronym for Cuban army intelligence. Later he joined the G-2, the political police whose job was to ferret out Batista sympathizers and other "counterrevolutionary elements."

Then, in November, 1960, Morales defected, sought refuge in the Brazilian embassy in Havana and eventually was able to leave Cuba. "I had to choose between Moscow and Washington, and I chose to go to Washington" was the way Morales later described his decision. There are those, mostly his enemies, who still question where his loyalties truly lie.

Miami, then as now, was full of

Right, Morales is led away by a Miami detective in 1978 after being arrested on drug and weapons charges. He was accused of possessing 100 pounds of marijuana and carrying a concealed weapon, but he was acquitted, claiming that he had been working "undercover" for the police at the time. Opposite page, Morales last month outside a Miami courtroom where he appeared at a hearing in connection with a narcotics case in which he is the principal prosecution witness.





stateless people. Soldiers of fortune were everywhere and there was always a new conspiracy. It was his kind of town. When Morales arrived in Miami, no stranger to intrigue, he quickly learned that he could acquire both money and clout in spying — on other Cubans.

He proved a valuable asset to the FBI, which had a hard time during the early flood of Cuban refugees trying to tell the "good," or anti-Castro Cubans, from the "bad," or pro-Castro ones. Sometimes, federal officials have since found, they are one and the same.

Morales pointed the finger for the FBI and, in time, became an enforcer for the CIA in the political jungles of Little Havana. When one political faction or other got out of line, Morales would arrive "to settle things."

Rafael Villaverde, former head of the Little Havana Community Center, said of Morales: "When Mono came to the door, you knew you had trouble. You knew the agency was leaning on you and you had better listen."

Villaverde, an intelligence officer in the Bay of Pigs Brigade who died recently in a boating accident, became a major protagonist in the Mo-

rales story. For reasons not completely clear, there was a long enmity between the two men, some say because Morales believed Villaverde to be a Castro agent. But the most dangerous "confrontation" between the two men occurred, according to Villaverde, at the Mutiny, when Morales sat and threw pats of butter at Villaverde while they were drinking together.

Underneath his facade of scar tissue, there lurks at times an incurable romantic inside Morales. He often talks of how much he likes the movie "Casablanca."

He watches it every chance he gets and says he always cries when Bogart stays behind to face the Nazis while the woman he loves flies off to safety.

Once, when asked if he had ever been forced to kill a woman, he replied: "You don't kill beautiful women, you die for them."

In return for the use of his muscle and street smarts, the people of Little Havana knew, the U. S. government had given Morales at least the tacit approval to run drugs. It wasn't the first time the CIA had shut its eyes to narcotics trafficking. In Vietnam, CIA "assets" were allowed to run drugs in return for in-

formation. Once, when Morales had been arrested on a narcotics charge — possession of marijuana — a search of a house he was using revealed something more than startling, even for a man with Morales' clout. Among his effects were notations of the secret radio frequencies used by all federal and local authorities for drug interdiction in south Florida, frequencies used by the DEA, the Coast Guard, the Customs Service and the Dade Public Safety Department. Even the Federal Communications Commission said it did not possess information about some of the frequencies.

The case that led to Morales' arrest on the marijuana charge began in February, 1978, when authorities listening to a court-ordered wiretap heard a known drug trafficker, Carlos Quesada, say: "It's coming big and good."

Law enforcement officials have said that they were unable to identify the voice of the man Quesada was talking to.

On the morning of March 26, 1978, police raided the home of a Quesada confidant and found Quesada, along with several hundred thousand dollars' worth of \$100 bills. Wrapped in paper in a den closet was a large



**'When Morales arrived in Miami, no stranger to intrigue, he quickly learned that he could acquire both money and clout in spying — on other Cubans.'**



MIAMI HERALD PHOTO



**'Morales was later acquitted on the narcotics charge, claiming he was working undercover.'**

cache of cocaine, later determined to be worth just under \$1 million. Several other persons were arrested. Two weeks later, acting on information obtained in the first raid, police staked out a truck outside a north Dade County home. Three men came out, got into the truck and

started heading south. Morales got into another vehicle. The police arrested the four, confiscating 5,000 pounds of marijuana. The ensuing search brought no end of surprises. Not only did the searchers discover the drug radio frequencies, but also they found a

radio scanner tuned to frequencies used by the FBI, DEA and Secret Service. A body search of Morales revealed he was carrying FBI credentials, which the FBI later said Morales must have stolen while working as their informant. But no charges were filed by the FBI, which normally uses a heavy hand against anyone carrying its gold shield without the legal right to have it. Morales was later acquitted on the narcotics charge, claiming he was working "undercover."

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Robertson, who died several years ago, was one of Morales' true-life heroes. The opinion was not reciprocal. Speaking once of Morales, Robertson said: "He learned quickly, was an efficient killer, and I always wondered which side he was on."

To hear Morales tell of his exploits, you would think he was to Africa what John Wayne was to the Wild West. He fought with the Fifth Congolese Brigade, commanded by Michael Hoare, a South African mercenary known as "Mad Mike." Hoare was arrested recently in South Africa on a skyjacking charge stemming from an abortive attempt to overthrow the leftist government of the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean.

During one of Hoare's major battles, in which the Congolese leftist forces were reported to have been led by Ernesto (Che) Guevara, Morales' mission was to attempt to infiltrate the enemy forces. Morales says that he did make contact with someone who was the last man to see Guevara in the Congo. Guevara was later killed in Bolivia attempting to lead a peasant uprising.

Asked recently in a court deposition what his unit was called, Morales said, "the Einsatzgruppen," the same name the Nazis gave their

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**'Morales the hunter became the hunted. In 1974, a bomb went off under his car.'**

special forces used to liquidate whole villages in World War II. "We were an elite unit from the Central Intelligence Agency that were attached to the fifth mercenary brigade," Morales said. "And we used the cover of being mercenaries."

How many people did he kill? "I inflicted casualties . . . You don't know what happens after you place a bomb or fire into a bush," he said.

Morales returned to Miami in 1964, seeking a *raison d'être*. It was during this period that he came to the fore, as it were, as an informant. In 1968, the FBI had identified his fingerprints on a bomb that had gone off in a firm that sold medical supplies to Cuba.

It was a time when loose organizations of exiles ran around, under the aegis of the CIA, carrying out little missions that sometimes got out of hand. His fingerprints were barely dry before the FBI let him off the hook for the bombing and used him to get somebody else.

The "somebody else" was Orlando Bosch, a pediatrician who headed an anti-Castro terrorist group known as *Accion Cubana*. Morales went to work for Bosch, ostensibly making bombs. Actually, the FBI made the bombs and gave them to Morales. He helped Bosch place bombs aboard ships and other targets selected by Bosch, and then — in a twist that was a kind of forerunner of Abscam — Morales became the chief witness against Bosch at his trial in Miami in 1968 for conspiring to blow up foreign ships that he believed were involved in trade with Cuba or other Communist countries.

In one tape recording played during the trial, Morales was heard to say, "I understand a man named Hunt of the Republican Party . . . [unintelligible] . . . well . . . [unintelligible] Texas has given \$15,000 to place bombs."

No one has ever determined who the mysterious "Hunt" was.

During the trial, Bosch's attorney asked Morales if he was known by any nicknames. Morales replied "Mono."

"How about Chivato [stool pigeon]?" the defense attorney asked. Morales did not have to answer because of a prosecution objection.

Bosch was convicted and given a 10-year sentence, but was paroled after four. He then violated his parole by going to Venezuela, where his path was once again to cross Morales'.

But before that, Morales the hunter became the hunted. In 1974, a bomb went off under his car as he was driving along West Flagler Street. It was made of 500 ball bearings and C-4 plastic explosives with a

hand grenade used as a detonator. Masking tape was wrapped around the grenade's "spoon" and attached to the car's manifold, so that after the vehicle had been driven for a few minutes the heat from the manifold would weaken the tape and the spoon would be released, setting off the grenade — and the bomb.

Fortunately for Morales, the force of the explosion was absorbed by the transmission, deflecting the ball bearings. Morales escaped with only minor injuries. Exile legend will tell you he laughed as he described it. But Morales, in fact, was badly shaken, and on the verge of tears when questioned by police. It was thought, at the time, to have been the work of Bosch, but it is now generally believed by law enforcement that one of Morales' drug competitors — probably one he had informed on — placed the bomb.

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Shortly after 1 PM on Oct. 6, 1976, Cubana airlines Flight 455 lifted off from Barbados' Seawall Airport en route to Jamaica and Havana. Five minutes after takeoff, the pilot radioed Barbados: "Seawall, Seawall, CU455. We have a fire on board, request immediate landing permission." From the shore, the islanders could see the flaming DC-8 airliner going down into the warm waters of the Caribbean as a second explosion ripped through the craft. All 73 persons on board, including the Cuban national fencing team, died.

Two days later, Hernan Ricardo and Fernando Lugo — two passengers who had boarded the plane at Trinidad and left it at Barbados — were arrested. They had called Caracas, Venezuela, with a coded message after making their way back to Trinidad. Ricardo, it turned out, was working for the Venezuelan police and counter-intelligence agency, DISIP.

So was Ricardo Morales. Although no one knew it at the time, Morales had recently been hired as his boss.

DISIP and the regular Venezuelan police had a major diplomatic problem on their hands: Because of the large Cuban exile colony living in Venezuela, the government had made a tacit agreement with the terrorists: Do what you want, but not in Venezuela. Now that under-the-table agreement was coming back to haunt them, or so they thought.

At that time, too, in late 1976, terrorists operating out of Miami — who share a hatred for Castro but little else — had held a solidarity meeting in the Dominican Republic, forming what was described as a Cuban PLO — called CORU — in which all the groups agreed to band together to oust Castro. It was, and is still, widely believed



that the CIA sponsored the meeting to punish Castro for refusing to take his troops out of Angola.

More than a score of bombings took place at Cuban diplomatic and airline offices around the world in the aftermath of that meeting, but primarily in the Western Hemisphere. A related act was the attempt to kidnap the Cuban consul in Merida, Mexico, in July, 1976.

But the bombing of Flight 455 drew the most outrage. Castro accused the CIA of being directly involved and abrogated the recently concluded hijacking treaty negotiated with the United States that would have allowed the State Department to get its hands on sky-jackers who were fleeing to Cuba and taking dozens of U.S.-owned planes with them.

Also, Orlando Bosch, the man Morales had put in jail in the United States, was now in Venezuela and he was quickly arrested for the Cubana airliner bombing by none other than Morales himself. That, supposedly, was that. Bosch was subsequently convicted of the bombing and is still in a Venezuelan jail.

But things began to come unraveled in an outpouring of *mea culpa* by Morales in early April of this year during court proceedings for "Tick Talks," a major narcotics case in which he is the star witness.

Under Florida law, defense attorneys are allowed to take depositions from prosecution witnesses prior to trial. Attorney Douglas Williams, who once unsuccessfully prosecuted Morales on a murder charge, spent 10 days questioning him under oath. In his testimony, Morales said that Bosch had nothing to do with the airliner explosion.

In the transcript, Morales said it was he — not Bosch — who was the conspirator. This was at a time when Morales was working not only for Venezuela, but also for the FBI and — some say — the CIA. The CIA denies that. The FBI sheepishly does not deny he was working for it at the time.

This was the exchange that took place on April 5, 1982, as Williams questioned Morales at the Dade County Justice Building in Miami:

Q. Have you ever . . . either fabricated or assisted in the fabrication of an explosive or placed or assisted in the placement of an explosive that blew up an airliner? Have you ever done that?

A. Say that again?

Q. Have you ever . . .

A. I'm going to cut it short for you. Yes.

Q. On how many different occasions?

A. One.

## **'Orlando Bosch, the man Morales had put in jail in the United States, was now in Venezuela and he was arrested for the Cubana airliner bombing.'**

Q. When and where?

A. Barbados.

Q. When, please, sir?

A. 1976. Let me correct myself, so I won't have to do it tomorrow. The craft involved was a Communist air force plane from the Republic of Cuba.

Q. How many people were on board?

A. There were, including North Korean spies . . . cadres, DGI [Cuban intelligence] personnel and air force officers of the Cuban air force and assorted members of the Communist Party . . . I believe that the government of Cuba is the only [one] that could come up with the exact figure.

Q. What is the best information you have?

A. According to the press, which, to the best of my knowledge is wrong, 73.

Q. Did you place that explosive device on the aircraft, or did you fabricate it?

A. No, I did not place and I did not fabricate it.

Q. What part did you have in that incident?

A. In that incident?

Q. Yes, what did you do?

A. Oh, I was part of the conspirators.

Q. What specific part did you play that resulted in the blowing up of that airplane?

A. Oh, surveillance of the regular flights of that Cuban air force plane, providing by a third party the explosives.

Q. Is that to say you made available the explosives to the people who actually did the manual work through a third person, an intermediary?

A. Yes.

Q. What was the part in that incident or episode, so far as you know, played by Dr. Bosch?

A. None whatsoever.

Q. You have heard that he has

been implicated in it or accused of it, haven't you?

A. Oh, yes; in fact, I arrested him.

Q. Is it your testimony that you arrested him for that episode?

A. I was ordered to arrest Dr. Orlando Bosch and produce him to my immediate superior [in DISIP], Deputy Dr. Rafael Rivas Vasquez.

Q. This is, then, while you were with DISIP?

A. That was at the time I was commissar in charge of division 54.

Q. So, did you actually arrest Dr. Bosch and deliver him over?

A. I went out of the headquarters, along with one of my inspectors, to the location provided me by my immediate superior, and I went into the house and, since Orlando Bosch had already been informed that I was on my way down there to pick him up, [he] was waiting for me. And after having lunch, at that house, I proceeded to return Dr. Orlando Bosch to the main building of the DISIP in Caracas.

Q. Is it your testimony, as you sit here now, Mr. Morales, that to your knowledge, regardless of the source of your knowledge, wherever it came from, Orlando Bosch had no connection either directly or indirectly with the demolition of that airplane?

A. Has no guilty [sic] whatsoever.

Q. Well, let's not confuse ourselves with . . . evaluated concepts.

A. Let's not confuse myself.

Q. Let's not get involved — I'm asking you about the realities of it.

A. He [Bosch] has nothing to do with it at all.

Q. At the time you furnished the explosives, did you know that they were going to be used to sabotage or blow up that airplane?

A. Not at the beginning, and the source of explosives, Mr. Williams, was the result of a search executed by agents of my division in a house that was suspected of being used by foreign intelligence enemies, and

there was a lot of material that was seized and there were some explosives . . . found there, which were, of course, turned over to the explosive and disposal division of the DISIP, and that's where — that's from where, later on, the explosives found their way into this Cuban air force plane.

Q. Were you responsible, either directly or indirectly, for the explosives finding their way eventually into the airplane?

A. I share.

Q. Did you know at the time . . .

A. I share the responsibility.

Q. I understand. Did you know at the time you took whatever steps were necessary in order for the explosives to be put on their path that eventually wound up inside the airplane?

A. Of course.

Q. Did you know they were going to be used to explode the airplane?

A. Of course.

In questioning, Williams probed Morales on his feelings about the victims, especially women and children.

Q. Didn't you learn that there were on board several women who ostensibly were traveling as spouses or mates or partners to some of the men on board?

A. They fall in the category of assorted Communist Party members.

Q. If, in fact, there were children under the age of 18 on board that airplane, would you still regard them as being Communist sympathizers under any circumstances?

A. I will consider them — that is preposterous, because I have no knowledge about that, but that is preposterous — but to please you, Williams, I will say that they will belong to the Youth Communist Organization, and in due time, they will become full-fledged Communists.

Q. Not anymore.

A. Well, not anymore in their cases.

Morales went on to say that Ricardo, one of the men arrested for putting the bomb on the plane, worked under him.

Q. Who was his control?

A. I was his control.

Morales learned at least part of what he knows about explosives from the United States government. "I was introduced to the wonderful world of C-4 . . . [by] the Central Intelligence Agency," he said, referring to a commonly used plastic explosive.

In the thousands of pages that follow, Morales details his murder of a man named Eladio Ruiz, the attempted machine-gun killing of Costanza in Miami and about 20

## **'Morales details his murder of a man named Eladio Ruiz, the attempted machine-gun killing of Costanza in Miami and about 20 bombings in Miami.'**





bombings in Miami, some of which he said he carried out for a mob-connected man — charging whatever the traffic would bear. Sometimes he would charge \$1,000 for a bombing, sometimes less.

When Williams asked him, in effect, if he was doing bombings for just about anyone who required his craft, Morales said: "Yes, I guess you could say that."

One day, he related to Williams, he was given a "bombing mission," but could not find any explosives. When Williams said that would be like Hershey not being able to find chocolate, Morales replied with a smile: "Some days, life is just a bitch."

The case that led to Morales' dramatic deposition is a major narcotics trafficking caper, or so Morales says, called Tick Talks. It got its name because a listening device, later discovered by the accused conspirators, was placed in a clock. The case was exclusively a Morales production, in which the Miami police and State Attorney Janet Reno still seem to have only minor parts. The police say they knew all about Morales' "indiscretions," including the airline bombing, before the case ever started.

One of the chief investigators, D. C. Diaz, testified at a court hearing that he knew of Morales' involvement in the crash, adding: "To my knowledge, it was some kind of CIA operation." Morales also has said that he told the prosecutor, Assistant State Attorney Rina Cohan, all about his past dealings in terrorism.

Forty-seven persons — some famous, some infamous — were arrested in Tick Talks, including Quesada, which was no surprise. But the accused in the case also included Villaverde, the former head of the Little Havana Community Center and one of the more respected members of the exile community. Another defendant was Frank Castro, one of Miami's better-known terrorists, who is the first to say he deals in bombs, but not narcotics.

Jerome Sanford, a former federal prosecutor who handled major drug cases in Miami during his tenure in the U. S. attorney's office, knows and even likes Morales probably as well as any Anglo. He says the entire case defies his comprehension. He says he's known the people involved too long to believe they would be so stupid.

He has joined a large group of exile watchers trying to figure out Tick Talks. The only thing that is clear from Morales' initial statements to the authorities and from the defense depositions is that both sides are trying to manipulate the case for motives best known to themselves.

Very little narcotics were found by the

police, and the conversations recorded by the listening device are incomprehensible. There is endless chit-chat, in Spanish, about dogs, horses and cows, all of which the police say are code words for drugs.

Animosity between Villaverde and Morales went back a long way. Among other things, each had accused the other of working for Fidel Castro. But there is an added dimension to the Villaverde story. He died March 81 in the Bahamas in a boating accident. His body was never recovered. He had been a major federal government witness in the burgeoning investigation of renegade CIA man Edwin Wilson, who has fled to Libya and who is accused of illegally supplying Libyan strongman Moammar Khadafy with U. S. weapons and technology. Wilson, at one point, had tried to hire Villaverde, his brother and a third man to kill a Khadafy enemy hiding in Egypt.

Villaverde was lured to Switzerland and met with Wilson on the belief that he was being hired to kill the terrorist known as "Carlos." When Villaverde learned the true identity of his target, he said, he refused and informed friends at the CIA that Wilson was involved "with the Communists." From that point on, Villaverde said, he started having problems, with the FBI and with Tick Talks.

Assistant U. S. Attorney Lawrence Barcella, who is heading the Justice Department's investigation of Wilson, says that he doubts Villaverde's harassment theory. But Barcella adds: "I never did understand that whole Miami scene."

Morales, for his part, told police and the prosecutor in Miami that while he was a big mover in the cocaine trade, he turned informer against Quesada and the others because they wanted to start dealing in heroin.

And that, he said, offended his sense of morality.

#### Solutions to Last Week's Puzzles

##### QUOTE-ACROSTIC

Norman Lear:  
About Success

"Young people need to know that there is sufficient reward in life for succeeding simply at the level of 'doing one's best.' The plain truth is that you are not a failure if you don't make the top spot."

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EATINI STARE ESTO RICE  
SHOUS AGALIA OAHAN DINIA  
EHS OAHNTHOCHTES ADAS  
TOED EONG VIKES LESTE  
KNUTE COLAS OBA NUL  
CHRISTOPHERPHIXE  
NIP KEN BOVLE NARVA  
ONER EINGS ASINI RIOS  
OIRA RAINEMUTHINT SAU  
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