

Cuban Exile Manuel Ray Among 8 Held by British

By Dan Kurzman
Staff Reporter

Cuban exile leader Manuel Ray, who had promised to land in Cuba by May 20 or die in the attempt, was one of eight men captured by a British destroyer on Monday at the Bahamian island of Anguilla Cay.

A United States Coast Guard plane was involved in the capture, though American officials maintain that its only role was to relay a radio message from the Destroyer Decoy ordering the Cuban boat to halt.

Whatever the U.S. involvement, many observers saw in it an element of irony. Both the United States and Ray's Revolutionary Junta had said that Ray was not receiving American support. But there nevertheless had been widespread belief among Cuban exiles and diplomatic observers that he was.

One U.S. official appeared to regret Ray's capture, saying, "Well, what could we do when the British asked for our help—tell them to jump in the lake?"

Andrew St. George of Life magazine, one of two American photographers who were captured, told the press in Nassau: "Yes, Ray was in our group. He has no declaration to make now. He will make no statement until he arrives in Cuba to join the underground forces who are fighting there now."

Ray, who was booked by

the British under the name of Manuel Martinez, almost made it to Cuba on May 22, according to one report, but his launch sped back to the Bahamas after being detected by a Cuban gunboat.

Ray and two other Cuban exiles were captured on the island by a Decoy landing party after five others, including the two Americans, were caught in the fleeing boat. It is presumed that the craft was heading for Cuba, though it is not clear why Ray was ashore.

Some Latin American diplomats here said that Ray's prestige probably would not suffer as a result of his failure to get in by his May 20 deadline since he was captured apparently while trying to get in. Ray's pledge had created an electric atmosphere of hope in Miami's large Cuban exile community that an effective Cuban underground would soon emerge.

Police sneaked "Martinez" off the Decoy yesterday after his seven companions were taken off openly and sent to magistrate's court for trial. When Ray himself entered the courtroom, surrounding policemen shielded him from the

view of newsmen.

The magistrate fined each of the prisoners \$14 for illegal possession of firearms and dismissed charges of illegal entry into British waters.

Immigration officials then took charge of them. It is not clear how long they will be held.

The second American photographer in the group was Thomas Dunken, who formerly worked for the Tampa Tribune and the St. Petersburg Times in Florida.

A State Department spokesman said that the Coast Guard plane was on a "routine patrol" when it "came across" the chase. He said the aircraft received the destroyer's "halt" message by radio and dropped it near the boat in a corked block of balsa wood marked with a red flag.

Ray's craft, which was loaded with arms and ammunition, was finally captured after a 12-mile chase when the Decoy overhauled it.