

POLICE SPY TALKS

Chicano leader tells of starting violence to justify arrests

CHICANO leader TELLS of starting violence to justify arrests

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Another police informer surfaced in the Los Angeles area last Monday under the auspices of the Citizens' Research and Investigating Committee (CRIC), this time with the warning to still active informants that, "It does not pay to be an informer because when they no longer need you, they'll frame you."

These words were spoken by Eustacio (Frank) Martinez at the end of a press conference at the Los Angeles Press Club, where he revealed that for two years he had worked as police informer among Chicano activists in Texas and California.

Martinez, 23, told the assembled newsmen that he had been an informer and agent provocateur for the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Enforcement Division of the U.S. Treasury Department (ATF) and under instructions from his supervisors had committed illegal acts which allowed the police to make arrests and raid headquarters of the Chicano Moratorium Committee.

Martinez, repeating taped statements he had previously given CRIC investigators, said that following his arrest for possession of an illegal weapon in Houston, Texas, in July of 1969, he was contacted by one "Tito Garcia," who identified himself as an agent for ATF. Garcia stated that Martinez would not be charged for the Federal Firearms violation if he would work as an informant and agent provocateur for that agency. Martinez, upon his agreed release from jail, was given and carried out the assignments of infiltrating the Mexican-American Youth Organization (MAYO) and the Brown Berets in Houston and Kingsville, Texas; provided intelligence on both groups and their members; and committed acts of provocation and violence in his role as militant Chicano leader.

During this period from September, 1969, to October, 1970, Martinez participated in a protest march in Alice, Texas, designed to bring attention to the educational problems of Chicanos and attempted disruption

by jumping on a car and trying to cave its top in. He also, along with "Tito Garcia," attempted to set up a purchase of guns from members of the local MAYO.

During this same period he burned a cross in front of the home of Katie Brooks, a Vista worker in Houston, and later burned her house down. During high school demonstrations in Houston, he also crossed the police line in an attempt to create violence against MAYO instructions.

After purchasing some explosives while he was a Brown Beret organizer he somehow blew his cover and was suspected of being an informer. At this point (October, 1970), he was sent to Los Angeles by the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division along with "Tito Garcia," who remained his contact until January, 1971, when Martinez was introduced to ATF Agents Fernando Ramos and Jim Riggs.

Once in Los Angeles, Martinez began spreading rumors against Rosalio Munoz, then Chairman of the Chicano Moratorium Committee. He accused Munoz of being too soft, "not militant enough, and not going all the way, as he should." This resulted in the ouster of Munoz, which allowed Martinez to become Chairman of the Moratorium Committee himself in November, 1970. He continued as Chairman until March, 1971, when he took a trip back to Texas.

During his period of leadership in the Moratorium Committee, Martinez said that he continually advocated the use of illegal weapons and violent tactics. During a picket line at the Hollenbeck Police Station, Martinez interfered with a police officer who was ticketing the car of a female demonstrator. This resulted in the arrest of both Martinez and the woman. He stole letters and other documents from the Chicano Moratorium office and paraded in front of the office with a shotgun in order to provoke a raid, which took place that same day.

In October, 1970, under instructions from "Tito Garcia," Martinez

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disrupted a meeting of Senator John Tunney in East Los Angeles, shutting the sound system off and physically attacking the Tunney party. (CRIC investigators say that Tunney remembers the incident very well, as his assistant, Mr. Thompson, was beaten at the time but would not give CRIC an affidavit to this effect.)

At the press conference Martinez identified a young man in a blue suit who was tape recording the conference as an Officer Valencia of the Criminal Conspiracy Section (CCS) of the Los Angeles Police Department, who participated in the raids on the Chicano Moratorium Committee. When asked by newsmen to identify by name other officers he was in contact with while he was an undercover informant, Martinez named Officers Armas, Saviellos, and Dominguez of CCS.

Upon returning to Los Angeles, Martinez was then given instructions by ATF agents Riggs and Ramos to infiltrate a Chicano organization, La Casa de Carnalismo. At this time Martinez was given a membership list and shown photographs by agents Riggs and Ramos to help him identify "leading militants" and possible members of the Chicano Liberation Front (CLF). Martinez was told that CLF was responsible for all the bombings in East Los Angeles, that La Casa de Carnalismo was the overground name for CLF, and that if it were necessary for Martinez to carry out bombings himself, he should do so and ATF would supply the necessary explosives.

Martinez then stated that he made contact with La Casa on various occasions in late June and early July of 1971, trying to find out where CLF was getting its explosives. He states that he reported back to Riggs and Ramos that he never heard mention of CLF at La Casa, he never discussed or heard discussed acts of violence by La Casa members, and that the program of La Casa was immigration counselling, English classes for Chicanos, self-defense classes and the dispensing of food to needy families. The main concern of La Casa, in fact, was the elimination of illegal narcotics, especially heroin and barbiturates from the Chicano community.

At that time, Martinez states, he was told that his "information was a bunch of bullshit" and that "we are going to close that organization down by any means necessary." Riggs and Ramos also told Martinez that his job was infiltration and order taking and they would worry about the rest.

Martinez then was given the assignment of infiltrating another informer in La Casa. Martinez states that this man, "Nacho," was brought down from the Oakland Bay area. Martinez said that he refused to infiltrate "Nacho" into La Casa because "Nacho" was an addict, and at that point had no further contact with La Casa himself. It was at that point that he introduced "Nacho" to the 3rd Street Gang in another part of the barrio and told Riggs and Ramos that he would not work with a heroin addict or participate in a frameup of La Casa.

In September, 1971, Martinez made a court appearance concerning charges arising out of demonstrating on August 29, 1971, the anniversary of the "Chicano Moratorium Riots." Martinez was charged with inciting to riot and interference with a police officer. Because he had incurred those charges under ATF orders, he had been promised protection from prosecution. However, Martinez states that Riggs appeared and attempted to force Martinez to plead guilty, with the intention of sending him back to Texas. When a newsman asked Martinez why he had decided to publicly tell his story at this time, Martinez replied, "For the simple reason that I was beginning to be aware that our people were being railroaded, and for another thing, I was being sold out. I had good intentions of working for the government. I believed in it. When I began to see how corrupt the government was in destroying my people, I couldn't see it anymore."

At the point in time when Martinez stopped working for the ATF, in October of 1971, Martinez contacted Mrs. Isabel Rodriguez, the mother of

some members of La Casa de Carnalismo. He told her that he had been working as an informer for the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division of the U.S. Treasury Department and was willing to give evidence for the defense in the case of "Los Tres del Barrio," Rodolfo Sanchez, Juan Fernandez and Alberto Ortiz. He was willing to testify that on previous occasions he had been shown pictures of the three defendants and told to "concentrate" on Sanchez as he was a leading suspect in the East L.A. bombings. As Martinez' own investigation had convinced him of the innocence of members of La Casa, he was willing to testify for the defense as to his knowledge of an attempted frameup of La Casa.

During the press conference, the case of the three members of La Casa was gone into in some detail as it obviously had bearing on the whole question of agents provocateurs in East Los Angeles. According to CRIC, another ATF informant, Robert Wayne Middleton, also known as Robert Wayne Patterson, also known as Francis Marion, was in prison and contacted Federal Narcotics Agent Roberto Canales. Middleton told Canales that Rodolfo Sanchez was a drug pusher and if Canales obtained Middleton's release, he would set Sanchez up for an arrest.

Middleton had been twice convicted for armed robbery and in 1968 while out on parole, was found in

possession of a gun and sent back to prison. As Mike McCarthy, CRIC representative, said at the press conference, this would have normally meant a five year imprisonment, but Middleton was out in 18 months because the inmates at Soledad Central and Soledad South had caught him informing to the prison authorities. On February 5, 1971, Middleton was arrested for a bank robbery in North Hollywood but was again released to continue his career as an informant.

Middleton twice attempted to buy narcotics from Sanchez, but on both occasions Sanchez told him he was no longer in narcotics, wanted to go back to school and make something of his life, and was a member of La Casa, which was devoted to getting narcotics out of the barrio. Despite these rebuffs, Middleton continued to tell Canales that Sanchez was a pusher.

On July 21, 1971, a man telephoned Rodolfo Sanchez, identified himself as "Bobby Parker," and told Sanchez that he wanted to score three pieces of heroin.

"Bobby Parker" was in reality Federal Narcotics Agent Roberto Canales. Neither was Rodolfo Sanchez a drug pusher. He was in reality a member of Carnalismo, a Chicano organization taking direct action against pushers. But each, playing their roles, agreed to meet next day for a possible deal.

Rodolfo did not go alone. Two other members of Carnalismo, Juan Fernandez and Alberto Ortiz, accompanied him to make sure nothing happened to Rodolfo and, according to CRIC, to run the pusher out of the barrio.

They met and somehow during the meeting "Bobby Parker" reached for his gun and someone there, believing that "Parker" was a pusher, shot him with the result that he is now permanently paralyzed from the waist down.

Juan, Rodolfo and Alberto were arrested shortly thereafter, charged with conspiracy, and assault and robbery of a federal agent. After a trial which the Chicano community claims was fraught with prejudice, including the exclusion of the testimony of Frank Martinez who wanted to speak about the entrapment policies of government agents in relation to Carnalismo, Los Tres were found guilty. Sanchez was sentenced to 40 years in prison, Fernandez to 25 years, and Alberto Ortiz to 10 years.

The press conference concluded with a demand by Frank Martinez, the Carnalismo attorneys present (Antonio Rodriguez and Robert Duncan), and the CRIC representatives, that the cases of Los Tres be reopened and that there be a Congressional investigation of how the FBI, the Federal Narcotics Bureau, the Los Angeles Police Department, the ATF, and the Special Service Unit of the California Department of Corrections cooperate in attempting political repression of dissident groups.

(According to Mike McCarthy of CRIC at the press conference, Middleton was evidently involved with all these agencies in his checkered career as an informant. McCarthy claims that although there is a \$100,000 bench warrant out for Middleton, courtesy of the criminal bank robbery division of the FBI, Middleton is at liberty and working with the subversive division of the FBI in

narcotics purchases. One of the demands made at the press conference was that the government produce Middleton as a witness in the case of Los Tres.)

During the questioning by newsmen, Martinez hinted at a variety of informant work he did, or was asked to do, for various agencies. He said that he was asked to infiltrate the Peace Action Council in Los Angeles and was urged to go to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade. He was also asked to investigate the Manson families procurement of weapons and got close enough to them in some unspecified manner to take photographs of the girls before their aborted raid on a Hawthorne gun shop.

Other press conference tidbits were that Martinez was paid only \$10 a week for his informant activities and lived off food and clothing supplied to him by the Chicano Moratorium Committee, where he also slept. He was paid in cash but had to sign receipts. The press conference broke into laughter when Martinez revealed that he often signed his vouchers with the name of the Mexican revolutionary, Emiliano Zapata. CRIC sent McCarthy to Texas for a week to check up on various aspects of the Martinez statement, including where Martinez worked, lived and how he survived on such limited funds. (McCarthy said, simply, at the press conference, "There's a lot of poverty around.")

One loose end at the press conference was the issuance of an information sheet saying that CRIC was also in possession of statements from an alleged former ATF agent, Larry Shears, about a plot to assassinate United Farm Workers; Union leader Cesar Chavez, and to burn down that union's headquarters. But Larry Shears did not show up, and no one asked why.

At the close of the conference, I

claims," which rather missed the whole point of the story about provocation of trouble in the Chicano community. Also the story itself, while hitting all major high-points of the statements by Martinez (although not in as much detail as given here), does not say one word about the demand for a Congressional investigation of the inter-agency workings of intelligence-operative agencies in California or the demanded reopening of the Los Tres case.

It can only be concluded that the education of the newsmedia in Los Angeles must still be continued because they are not sensitive to all the ramifications of what is presented them. The *Times* story could be

graded at best with a "B;" an "A" requires much more effort and sensitivity than was exhibited.



During the press conference, Frank Martinez identified this man as Officer Valencia of the Criminal Conspiracy Section (CCS) of the Los Angeles Police Department. See story for details. Free Press photo by Art Kunkin.

overheard McCarthy and Marilyn Katz saying to each other that the newsmen present didn't seem to be doubting the Martinez revelations as much as they had the revelations of police informer Louis Tackwood at another CRIC press conference last October. Also McCarthy felt that such a mass of material had now been accumulated on the relation of police informers to political repression that a Congressional investigation could not be avoided.

Perhaps CRIC is right that the newsmen present no longer doubt the existence of police informers but the page three article in the *Los Angeles Times* of last Tuesday about the Martinez statements must certainly have been disappointing to

McCarthy. The misleading headline, for example, read, "Provoked trouble for lawmen, Chicano 'Informer'



Free Press photo by Art Kunkin

At the January 31 Press Conference of the Citizen's Research and Investigation Committee (CRIC) & La Casa de Carnalismo at the L.A. Press Club
From left to right: Michael McCarthy and Marilyn Katz of CRIC; Carnalismo attorney Antonio Rodriguez; Frank Martinez; and attorney Robert Duncan



Frank Martinez (Relaxing at the end of the press conference). Photo Art Kunkin

POLICE SPY



Eustacio (Frank) Martinez, former Treasury Informer

Free Press photo by Art Kunkin