

[Fuller version,
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The Campaign Against Hippies

Miami

An associate of four convicted Watergate conspirators says he was recruited for a team that planned strong-arm activities against "hippies" and "traitors" at the capitol last year.

Reinaldo Pico, a 36-year-old Cuban exile who accompanied the four twice to Washington for such operations last May, said in an interview that he believed their activities bore the Nixon administration's "official seal of approval."

The group's projects and intentions, as Pico described them in a voluble, gesture-punctuated Spanish, would have run parallel to sabotage efforts widely attributed to Republican agents in last year's political campaigns.

VETERAN

His sometime confederates, who were arrested with bugging equipment in the offices of the Democratic National Committee on June 17, had been organized by officials of the White House and of the Committee for the Re-Election of the President.

Pico, a veteran of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, said he had been left out of the June 17 foray and did not know why. He denied any prior knowledge of the burglary and wiretapping scheme.

In his first public discussion of the affair, Pico appeared loyal to his old comrade-in-arms, Bernard L. Barker.

Pico went to Miami in December, 1960, and in the following year he was put in touch with Barker, then active in organizing the CIA-backed Cuban invasion, in which Pico participated.

APPROVAL

"I thought this thing (last year's operations) had an official seal of approval of the United States Government," he said.

On May 2, 1972, Barker summoned Pico to his real estate office to tell him that J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, had been found dead that morning and would lie in state at the Capitol the next day.

"There are hippies and men who are traitors to this country and democracy," he

quoted Barker as telling him. "who are going to make demonstrations and perpetrate an outrage to Hoover."

Anti-war demonstrations had been scheduled before Hoover's death. The protests were on the west steps of the Capitol May 3 and May 4.

Barker, Pico and six or seven other men flew to Washington, checked into a hotel and "awaited instructions" from a source unknown to Pico.

At about 6 p.m. on May 3, he said, the men went to the Capitol. Barker engaged in a heated argument with a long-haired young man and, in the midst of it, Pico said, he knocked the protester down.

Frank A. Sturgis, who accompanied the group and who was later arrested at the Watergate complex, also hit one of the anti-war demonstrators, Pico said. Both attackers were immediately "seized" by Capitol policemen.

As they were led down the steps, Pico said a third member of the group told a police lieutenant that the two in custody were "anti-Communists" and "good men." They were then freed with a warning, Pico said, and left.

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