

MAY 26 1973

'Hippie' Squad Also Enlisted By 'Bug' Crew

By Paul Ramirez and Paul W. Valentine
Washington Post Staff Writers

Imprisoned Watergate conspirator Eugenio Martinez attempted to organize a band of phony "hippies" to disrupt McGovern headquarters at the Democratic National Convention last summer in Miami Beach, an anti-Castro Cuban activist said yesterday.

Pablo Fernandez, 28, of Miami, also said he and Martinez were among a 10-member "vigilante squad" summoned from Miami to Washington to attend the May 4, 1972, funeral of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover demonstrations outside the Capitol where Hoover's body lay in state.

The actions described by Fernandez appeared to be part of a general pattern of disruptions planned against antiwar demonstrations both in Washington and in Miami Beach during the presidential campaign, according to other Cuban exile sources.

Fernandez said Martinez approached him about organizing the McGovern headquarters disruption plan in mid-May, 1972, offering him \$700 a week. He turned the offer down, Fernandez said.

He said Martinez did not indicate where the money was to come from or what organization he represented, "but I thought he meant the CIA when he said 'we.'"

A source close to Fernandez says that Fernandez is a former CIA operative in South America and has known Martinez and fellow Watergate conspirator Virgilio Gonzalez for some years through their mutual membership in the Authentic Cuban Revolutionary Party, an exile group in Miami.

Fernandez said yesterday that Martinez asked him to recruit 10 persons to masquerade as hippies to descend on the Miami Beach headquarters of Democratic presidential

candidate Gerge McGovern.

There, he said Martinez told him the "hippies" would throw rocks, break glass, defecate and urinate in public "and all that sort of thing... to give the voters a bad impression of the people supporting McGovern."

After Fernandez refused to participate, he said, Martinez called him on two subsequent occasions, insisting that he join.

He said he told Martinez he "did not want to get involved," and he suspected that, at \$700 a week, Martinez and his superiors "would want more for their money" than just disrupting McGovern headquarters.

Martinez also wanted Fernandez to maintain close surveillance on McGovern's movements around Miami Beach, Fernandez said. In addition, Martinez indicated that some of the \$700 each week would pay for food and entertainment expenses in recruiting the "hippies," Fernandez said.

He said he does not know if Martinez asked other persons in Miami to join in the McGovern disruption plan.

Fernandez says he has worked as a volunteer informer for the Miami City Police Department at no charge. Maj. Adam Klemkowski, in charge of the department's intelligence unit, said yesterday "we did pay him some" but he could not recall how much when he volunteered as an informant briefly against the Vietnam Veterans Against the War in May, 1972.

Fernandez is employed as a clerk at a General Motors heavy equipment outlet in Miami.

Martinez continued talking with Fernandez about the McGovern disruption plan, Fernandez said, until only a few days before Martinez was arrested with four other men inside the Democratic national headquarters at the Watergate complex here on June 17, 1972.

During the Democratic

National Convention three weeks later in Miami Beach, there were few disruptive actions by demonstrators. On July 12, a crowd of about 150 protesters marched on the McGovern's headquarters in the Doral Hotel, demanding a dialogue with the candidate.

McGovern came out to the street and amid boos and chants attempted to talk with the crowd for about a half hour. Members of the crowd were protesting McGovern's earlier statement that he would leave a residual force in Thailand and Southeast Asian waters if American prisoners were not released.

Fernandez and other Cubans summoned to Washington for Hoover's funeral said they were under the mistaken assumption that the trip would lead to new developments in their continuing quest to overthrow the Fidel Castro regime.

"They sold us on the idea that this was a government thing to solve some of the problems dealing with the Cuban situation," Fernandez said.

Five of the men say that in addition to Fernandez, those who attended the funeral, included Watergate conspirators Bernard Barker, Eugenio Martinez, Virgilio Gonzalez and Frank Sturgis and Miamians Felipe DeDiego, Reinaldo Pico, Angel Ferrer, Humberto Lopez and Iran Gonzalez.

In separate interviews DeDiego, Pico, Ferrer and Fernandez said the organizer of the "mission" appeared to have been Barker who purchased airplane tickets and paid for hotel bills, meals and other expenses. Ferrer and Fernandez said they were given \$50 cash before leaving Miami and \$50 bills each after arriving in Washington.

The men said they were given various reasons for the trip. DeDiego said it was to "pay tribute to a great American" and to "bring us closer together as a team." Ferrer and Fernandez, who were recruited by Sturgis and Lopez, respectively, said they were told they would attend a meeting "dealing with Cuba."

Pico, however, said he was told by Barker they would be attending Hoover's funeral to demonstrate against "those who were going there to trample over Hoover's memory."

"We were told that we were going to the Capitol to demonstrate against the hippies and Communists who were flying Vietcong flags

and jubilant over Hoover's death," Pico said.

The 10 men arrived in Washington early in the afternoon of May 5, 1972, made short individual sight-seeing trips, then headed for the Capitol.

After viewing Hoover's body in the Capitol Rotunda, they spotted Daniel Ellsberg, the former Pentagon Papers defendant, and radical lawyer William Kunstler at an antiwar rally on the Capitol steps.

"There were a lot of hippies there, screaming, enjoying Hoover's death, and that excited us," said DeDiego. "We began yelling, 'traitor,' to the man (Ellsberg) and tried to break up the act."

According to Fernandez, Barker ordered the men to "get" Ellsberg and Kunstler.

"I realized that this was the meeting that Barker had mentioned and I felt betrayed," he said.

"We found ourselves in the middle of a fight. I was very disgusted. I didn't hit anybody. I was going to hit one guy, but he stood in front of me and said, 'Peace, brother' and then I couldn't hit him. I'm not a killer. They contracted the wrong guy and I think they later realized I was not the man for that kind of thing," Fernandez said. He said he returned to the motel alone in a cab.

In the ensuing fracas on the Capitol steps, Pico said he "slugged" a long-haired youth who had argued with Barker. "I thought he was going to hit 'Macho' (Barker), who's an older man, so I slugged him on the head," he said. Barker is 56 years old.

Sturgis and Ferrer, meanwhile, were involved in other fistfights and the three were arrested by uniformed police officers, Pico said.

"Then I saw a man in a gray suit give a signal to the policemen and one officer took us down to the street and told us we could go away," Pico said. The incident, he said reinforced his understanding that the trip was "a government mission."

Fernandez, Pico, DeDiego and Ferrer claim they never asked who had ordered or paid for the trip. The four said they "assumed" it had been a CIA operation because of Sturgis' and Barker's prior involvements with that agency.

"I thought we were going to deal with the CIA," DeDiego said. "That was how the Bay of Pigs began, with a group of Cubans going to Washington."

Six of the 10 Cubans who attended the Hoover funeral—including Barker, Sturgis, Martinez, Gonzales, DeDiego and Pico—returned to Washington three weeks later, ostensibly to disrupt other antiwar demonstrations expected outside the White House, according to Pico.