

# Castillo role questioned in Milián bombing

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Milián

Law enforcement officials are trying to determine whether Pablo Castillo, being held in connection with the 1976 attempted kidnaping of a Cuban consul in Mexico, had a role in the car bombing of Miami radio newsman Emilio Milián.

Officials began probing Castillo's possible role in the Milián bombing after Castillo failed a lie detector test about the bombing in April 1977.

Several weeks after the test, Castillo was subpoenaed to testify before the federal grand jury probing the Milián bombing. He pleaded the Fifth Amendment and was dismissed, his attorney, Jeffrey Weiner said last night.

Police investigators also are looking into a visit by Castillo to a May 14, 1977 church service at Dade County Jail, where he talked with convicted bomber Antonio de la Cova. The conversation took place the day after both men had appeared before the Milián grand jury.

Investigators are attempting to determine if de la Cova was intimidated by the conversation.

Castillo, now being held in the Federal Correctional Institute in South Dade, faces an extradition hearing here May 18 on the Mexican kidnaping charge. He also is charged with murdering the Cuban consul's chauffeur. Castillo was arrested on those charges here four months ago.

Weiner said Castillo told him last night that he was under the impression he passed the polygraph, administered by the FBI, "even though he was told there was some reaction to some of the questions . . .

"All of a sudden for a secret FBI polygraph to surface. . . I'm just suspicious about the timing," Weiner added. "It does seem sort of strange that it surfaces now when we are making progress fighting the extradition. . . There is no evidence whatsoever, that I'm aware of, that links Castillo to the Milián bombing."

The FBI, Metro and Miami police began investigating a possible connection between Castillo and the Milián bombing after Castillo failed the lie detector test. He submitted to the test voluntarily, shortly after he was acquitted of charges of conspiring to bomb the University of Miami campus during a 1976 visit by radical Angela Davis.

One source who has read the FBI report on the polygraph test concerning the Milián bombing said: "His answers were indicative of deception on the question of conspiracy. The test results also indicated de-

## Confessor tortured, lawyer claims

A confession detailing the alleged complicity of Gustavo Castillo in the 1976 attempted kidnaping of the Cuban consul in Merida, Mex., and the murder of his bodyguard was obtained by torturing another suspect in the crime, according to Castillo's lawyer.

Attorney Jeffrey Weiner said the confession was coerced from Orestes Ruiz, now in a Mexico City jail. Weiner said he obtained a letter from Ruiz detailing the torture when he visited Mexico last week.

Weiner said Ruiz, charged with Castillo and Gaspar Jimenez in the Merida incident, gave him a signed handwritten letter, which states:

"The torture consisted of electrical shocks in one leg and genitals. The shocks were given with a steel chain. . . The body was wetted so that it didn't have much resistance to the electricity. . . This was done all night long. . . by at least five policemen."

Weiner said Ruiz gave a signed statement to

Mexican authorities in the Merida jail to avoid further torture and was then transferred to Mexico City, where he has not been tortured again.

Castillo and Jimenez are being held without bond in a federal penitentiary in South Dade. They are scheduled for an extradition hearing here May 18 in which Ruiz' confession is likely to be an issue. Weiner said a confession coerced by torture is inadmissible as evidence in an United States court.

Weiner went to Mexico last week with a petition urging Mexico's attorney general to drop the extradition proceedings against Castillo. The petition warned that Cuban exiles will boycott Mexico and that torture methods in Mexican jails will be revealed if Mexico does not drop the extradition request.

The Mexican government has not commented on the petition.

ception on the question of whether he participated in the bombing."

Castillo failed all five key questions relating to participation and conspiracy in the Milián bombing, according to sources.

Weiner said he had never been told about the FBI report on the polygraph results. He added Castillo took the test voluntarily because "he was confident he was going to pass it because he was not involved in it."

He said Castillo told him he agreed to the test to avoid being "constantly followed and bugged" by local police probing the Milián case.

Castillo's visit to the Dade County Jail a month after he took the polygraph was reported by jail officials to the Metro Organized Crime Bureau.

Two days after Castillo visited de la Cova in jail, the convicted bomber called Milián at WQBA to tell him he had been unable to help more with his case, despite his grand jury testimony. Milián said de la Cova told him he knew nothing about it.

Metro's OCB detective D. Benitez, who questioned de la Cova about his conversation with Castillo, said he could not determine whether de la Cova was intimidated.

"He (de la Cova) was visibly shaken, he was very afraid," Benitez said.

"The manner in which Castillo entered the jail could intimidate anyone. It serves as a warning to others who might want to testify."

Benitez said de la Cova told him that he had dis-

cussed "politics" with Castillo, but refused to tell the officer whether anything had been said about the grand jury.

Sgt. David Freifelder, a jail officer at the time of Castillo's visit, told investigators de la Cova told him Castillo had been discussing de la Cova's appearance before the Milián grand jury.

Freifelder said de la Cova told him he had told Castillo the grand jury asked him about Castillo, but that he told the jury he had never seen Castillo before. Freifelder said de la Cova told him he had met Castillo for the first time at the May 14 jail church service.

The jail's Methodist chaplain, Rev. Roberto Pérez, said Castillo, a regular churchgoer when he was in jail on the U-M bombing conspiracy charges, told him he was visiting the jail because he wanted to participate in the morning mass.

Pérez said Castillo told him, "I am coming to share with the guys this morning, of my own spiritual life."

The chaplain said he had remembered Castillo from the time he had been held on the U-M bombing charges and assumed he was coming in with a lay couple who usually serve during the Saturday church services.

Pérez said he authorized Castillo's entry into the jail for that reason. The couple, investigators have found out, didn't know Castillo.

De la Cova is serving a 65-year-sentence for the May 1976 attempted bombing of a Little Havana adult bookstore and the previous firebombing of a U-M student apartment.