

THE ANA BELEN MONTES' CASE

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HEADLINE: **White House Wary of Cuba's Little Spy Engine That Could**

BYLINE:

By TIM GOLDEN

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Federal investigators' discoveries in recent years of Cuban espionage activities, including an operation that penetrated the Pentagon's intelligence agency, have cast light on what officials describe as a resilient intelligence service that continues to work aggressively in the United States.

Since 1998 in Florida, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has exposed a network of at least 16 accused or convicted Cuban spies who, while often pinched for cash by their country's economic troubles, succeeded in infiltrating several Cuban exile groups and worked patiently to try to get inside American military installations.

In a separate case in Miami, a senior immigration official convicted of disclosing classified information to a Cuban agent was sentenced in June 2001 and, last September, a federal judge imposed a 25-year prison term on the Pentagon's former senior intelligence analyst on Cuba, Ana B. Montes, who admitted to long service as a Cuban spy.

The Cubans' success at stealing American secrets appears to have been mixed. But even so, these incidents, along with concerns about Cuba's possible involvement in developing biological weapons and aiding terrorists, have set off a new debate about whether Mr. Castro's Communist government remains a threat to American national security.

"These activities and others prove that they are a hostile country, " Otto J. Reich, the Bush administration's special envoy for the Western Hemisphere, said of the espionage cases.

Predictably, the disagreement has set administration officials who want to step up pressure on the Castro government against bipartisan congressional leaders who have been gaining ground in a campaign to ease restrictions on Cuba.

But the matter has also taken on new urgency since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. In one behind-the-scenes fight, some administration officials have sought the reassignment of one of the government's most senior intelligence analysts on Latin America, arguing, among other things, that he has been "soft" on the threats posed by Cuba, officials involved in the discussions said.

Mr. Reich, officials said, was among several foreign policy officials who complained to the White House about government intelligence assessments on Cuba, in particular the work of the analyst, Fulton T. Armstrong, the national intelligence officer for Latin America.

According to several officials, Mr. Armstrong has written skeptically about Cuba's importance as a military threat, its intention to develop offensive biological weapons and its continued inclusion on the State Department's annual list of countries that sponsor terrorism. Mr. Armstrong, a career Central Intelligence Agency analyst who now serves on the National Intelligence Council, an advisory body for the director of central intelligence, also worked on the National Security Council in the Clinton administration.

But Mr. Armstrong's supporters respond that he has been targeted by ideologues who would distort the intelligence process to get the kind of analysis they want. These officials said that while Mr. Armstrong had sometimes ruffled feathers with his outspoken style, he was widely respected as an analyst and trusted by George J. Tenet, the director of central intelligence.

Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Reich and a spokesman for the C.I.A. all declined to comment on the matter.

During the 1990's, after the demise of the Soviet bloc and its subsidies to Cuba, a consensus emerged among American analysts that the security threat Cuba posed had greatly diminished. In 1998, a major Defense Department report to Congress concluded that the island's Communist government posed "a negligible threat to the U.S. or surrounding countries. "

But that conclusion outraged Cuban-American political leaders and some others, who insist that the Castro government continues to threaten the United States in less conventional ways: by its alliances with countries like Libya and Iran, its support for several groups that use terrorism, and its development of biotechnology and cyberwarfare capabilities that could be used offensively. Cuban leaders deny any such threats.

More recently, some Bush administration officials have offered a new explanation for the relatively sanguine views on Cuba that emerged during the Clinton administration: subversion within the American intelligence community. "A major reason, " said the undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, John R. Bolton, "is Cuba's aggressive intelligence operations against the United States. "

In a speech last year, Mr. Bolton noted that one of the early drafters of the Pentagon report was Ms. Montes, the Defense Intelligence Agency analyst who pleaded guilty

to spying for Cuba for 16 years. Ms. Montes was not paid to spy but said she acted to help Cuba defend itself against what she saw as Washington's hostility toward the island.

Intelligence officials said Ms. Montes gave her Cuban handlers volumes of defense and intelligence information about Cuba, including military contingency plans, details of intelligence-gathering efforts and profiles of American officials. But while a formal assessment of the security damage that Ms. Montes caused is continuing, several officials said there was no evidence that she was instructed to shade her analysis in order to influence policy

By contrast, the 16 Cuban spies indicted in Florida and known by their code name as La Red Avispa, or the Wasp Network, were unable to get their hands on any classified information at all. But it was not for lack of trying.

The spies operated not under diplomatic cover but as what are known as "illegals" -- spies without any apparent tie to the Cuban government. They took cheap apartments, drove used cars and held their secret meetings at Burger King and Pollo Tropical, accounting to Havana for every dollar they spent.

One Cuban agent stationed on Key West persuaded his handlers to let him move in with his girlfriend, a massage therapist, after arguing that he would save on expenses. (They told him to avoid marriage and children.)

According to testimony and documents at the trial, the Cubans made mistakes One illegal officer had to explain to Havana that his secure pager "drowned" when he left it in the pocket of his shorts and jumped into a swimming pool.

At the same time, however, their message traffic pointed to a sophisticated intelligence infrastructure behind the Miami network, one that law-enforcement officials said compensated for its poverty with meticulousness and patience.

Intelligence officials added that despite the recent blows it had suffered, Cuba's intelligence service might still have as many as a few hundred officers and agents operating in the United States.

"They are one of the most aggressive intelligence services there is," said Hector M. Pesquera, the head of the F.B.I.'s Miami office. "They made some mistakes and we were able to capitalize on them, but they are still very good They are very determined and they work the numbers. They know we can't cover everything."

Cuba has vigorously defended five of the spies who fought and lost their cases in federal court (seven others have pleaded guilty), insisting that the men sought only to thwart terrorism by radical exiles, like a spate of Havana bombings in 1997 that killed an Italian tourist. Yet the decrypted documents also point to other, less benign pursuits.

Among the "active measures" that the spies discussed --but apparently did not carry out --were making threatening phone calls, ostensibly from radical exiles, to the

publisher of The Miami Herald at the time; sending a mail bomb to a person thought to be a C.I.A. agent; and sneaking boats with explosives into Florida.

Officials said that what prompted the decision to prosecute most of the Wasp Network spies rather than simply deporting them (as is being done with the latest person accused of being a member of the network, who was arrested in May) was a link between two of the Cubans and the deaths of four exile activists whose planes were shot down by Cuban Air Force jets in 1996.

HIGHLIGHTS

Recent Cuban Spy Cases

SEPTEMBER 1998 --Ten people are charged in Miami with spying for Cuba, trying to infiltrate military sites and Cuban exile organizations. Six other people are later charged as part of a group known as the Wasp Network.

DECEMBER 1998 --Three Cuban diplomats at the United Nations are expelled for spying.

MAY 2000 --A senior immigration official in Miami is convicted of disclosing classified information and other charges related to contacts with Cuban agents.

JUNE 2001 --Five Cubans are convicted in Miami of conspiring to spy on the United States. The leader of the group is later sentenced on additional charges related to a Cuban attack in 1996 on two planes in which four members of a Cuban exile group were killed.

SEPTEMBER 2001 --Ana B. Montes, a top Pentagon intelligence analyst, is charged with spying for Cuba.

MAY 2002 --John R. Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, accuses Cuba of working to develop biological weapons, a charge Fidel Castro strongly denies.

AUGUST 2002 --Cuba's former ambassador to the United Nations, Alcibiades Hidalgo, says after defecting to the United States that most Cubans at the countrys mission to the United Nations are intelligence agents.

NOVEMBER 2002 --The United States expels four Cuban diplomats, in response to the Montes case.

How a Cuban Spy Sowed Confusion in the Pentagon

Ana Belen Montes could have gotten the death penalty. Instead the former U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency analyst who spied for Cuba got a 25 years sentence two weeks ago. The lenience was part of a plea whereby she agreed to tell the Justice Department about her espionage since 1985.

Justice has so far declined to publicize what Ms. Montes told interrogators. Fair enough. After all, U.S. intelligence would certainly not want Cuba and its allies in the Middle East to know what Ms. Montes revealed about her work on behalf of the communist regime.

Nonetheless, it is reasonable for Americans, now living under serious threats of aggressive terrorism, to wonder how much damage Ms. Montes did to homeland security. One reason she was picked up on Sept. 21,2001 was because in her position at the Pentagon she had access to highly classified intelligence not limited to Cuba. Normally, a discovered spy might be left in place for months and tailed in order to uncover more information about her contacts and modus operandi. But Ms. Montes was quickly arrested after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks for fear that she might further compromise U.S. security.

Aside from her ability to tell Cuba secrets that might be passed along to terrorists, there was another risk posed by Ms. Montes' penetration of the DJA. In her role as the key Pentagon intelligence analyst on Cuba, Ms. Montes could influence the National Intelligence Council and thereby put her stamp on consolidated NIC reports. Those reports combine the findings of separate agencies but Ms. Montes could have overshadowed other analysts if her views were more highly valued by the higher-ups who consolidate the information.

In fact, Ms. Montes held considerable sway over the Pentagon's opinion of Cuba. In 1998 the Defense Department released a high-profile report claiming that Cuba posed no military threat to the U.S. It discounted risks that Cuba was developing chemical and biological weaponry .Ms. Montes was the key drafter of that report, which means not only that it is pretty much useless to U.S. intelligence but that it may have contained disinformation damaging to U.S. security interests.

Ms. Montes is the 45-year-old daughter of Puerto Rican parents and was born on a U.S. military base in Germany. In 1979 she earned a degree in foreign affairs from the University of Virginia and in 1988 she finished a master's degree at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. In 1985 she began working as a junior analyst at the DIA, focusing on Nicaragua. She became a Cuba analyst in 1992 but reportedly worked for Cuba as far back as 1985.

According to an affidavit tiled by FBI Special Agent Stephen McCoy and posted on the Justice Department Web site, "during the course of her employment, Ms. Montes has had direct and authorized access to classified information relating to national defense." He also says that she "was a clandestine CuIS [Cuban Intelligence Service] agent who communicated with her CuIS handling officer" through encrypted messages on short wave radio.

Ms. Montes blew the cover of four U.S. agents working in Cuba and she shared numerous classified documents with Cuban intelligence. But it is her role in declaring Cuba harmless to the U.S. national security that may have had the biggest yet unappreciated effect.

Not surprisingly, the 1998 report grabbed big headlines in the U.S. Anti-embargo types used it to back their agenda for making nice with Fidel. Journalists and academics soft on totalitarian Cuba were longing for a more accommodating posture toward the regime, and so was Castro. Evidence from the Pentagon that no Cuban threat existed seemed to boost the chances for engagement with the dictator. "The Pentagon has concluded that Cuba poses no significant threat to U.S. national security and senior defense officials increasingly favor engaging their counterparts to reduce existing tensions," said Knight Ridder News Service.

William Cohen, then secretary of defense, did in fact have reservations about the report but pro-Cuban elements complained that he was merely responding to political pressure from Cuban-Americans. The Knight Ridder report referring to Cuban exile politics said, "That's why [Mr.] Cohen held off presenting the DIA report on Capitol Hill, which had been scheduled for Tuesday ."

As it turns out, Mr. Cohen was only exercising good judgment and common sense, perhaps even with input from other analysts who understood Castro and had far different opinions from those of Ms. Montes.

Yet, Ms. Montes had done her job well. Top U.S. military brass enthusiastically embraced the report. Marine General Charles Wilhelm, then head of U.S. Southern Command, was quoted in the Miami Herald saying that the Cuban military "has no capability whatsoever to project itself beyond the borders of Cuba, so its really not a threat to anyone around it," In a long-winded op-ed piece in the Palm Beach Post in 1998, retired Marine Gen. Jack Sheehan told of a trip to Cuba where he shared rum and cigars with Fidel, He argued that the U.S. needed a kinder, gentler attitude toward the regime. "Our intelligence data also supported the conclusion that Cuba was not a military threat to the U.S.," Mr. Sheehan wrote.

It is logical to suspect that one of Ms. Montes' jobs may have been to discredit defectors from Cuban intelligence who were telling stories of a less-than amicable Cuban agenda. Since then, State Department analysts have reported that Cuba has at least some bioweapons technology and has expressed concern that Cuba could share the science with rogue states. Iraq, Iran, Syria and Libya come to mind.

The claims that Cuba is no threat to the U.S. may have seemed believable in the sense that, for what it's worth, Cuba is in no position to mount a military attack on the U.S. But that is a long way from saying that Castro is a benign presence or is

incapable of doing harm to the U.S. through indirect means. That's why it is important to know to what extent information Ms. Montes shared with Cuba may have made its way to other U.S. enemies.

Updated November 1, 2002 12:15 a.m. EST

Ana



Montes Espionage Case

An Unrepentant Montes Sentenced to 25 Years

"All the world is one country"

Wednesday, 16 October 2002--The CI Centre was there at the 10:00 am sentencing of intelligence analyst Ana Montes of the Defense Intelligence Agency in courtroom 12 at the US District Courthouse for Washington, DC. Ricardo M. Urbina was the presiding judge. About 40 people were in attendance, including US Attorney Roscoe Howard, Jr. Montes's lawyer was the famed Plato Cacheris, lawyer to Rick Ames, Bob Hanssen and Monica Lewinsky.

Montes came into the courtroom dressed in a faded black and white horizontal striped jumpsuit with a white long sleeve shirt underneath. She looked embarrassingly out of place in the stereotypical prison garb amid the all-male lawyers on both sides who were in dark suits and ties. Yet she came in quickly, all-business like and never looked at the audience. She sat upright and attentively, looking at the judge, her face showing no sign of emotion.



Cacheris made a statement that his client had fulfilled her obligations and cooperated with the US government without reservation and that the government has said they are fully satisfied.

The prosecution then commended the "excellent work of counterintelligence agents in this country" in finding this spy. It was irrelevant what political beliefs Montes holds, they said. What would be far more relevant is an apology, and they left it at that.

Then Montes made her statement, which was about five minutes long. Looking directly at the judge, the judge looking directly at her, she began to read from prepared paper, with a US Marshal standing behind her.

"All the world is one country," she said, where one should love their neighbors as much as oneself. This should be the guide to relations between all countries, where there is tolerance for, and understanding, and treating other nations the way we should be treated: with respect. The United States never did this, she claimed. So she decided to obey her conscience rather than the law. She felt that US government laws against Cuba were cruel and unfair and felt morally obligated to defend Cuba. The US has displayed intolerance in the last 40 years and has never respected Cuba's right to develop in its own way. She asked

why the US tries to dictate who leads that country and what laws the country should have.
Why can't we let

Cuba decide its own way, she wondered. Montes admitted that her giving classified information to Cuba to defend itself was probably morally wrong and not justified. But that she did what she thought was right to counter a greater injustice. Her desire is that the United States and Cuba have normal relations based on tolerance, understanding, mutual respect and brotherly love. She noted that all the nations need to have these qualities instead of the hatred that now exists. Cuba wants dignity and respect and she thought a change in US policy towards Cuba would allow Cuba to drop its defensive measures, permit our nations to work together in our "one world country-one world homeland."

After Montes sat back down, Judee Ricardo Urbina very softly said that today was a very sad day. Sad for Ms. Montes, her family, her loved ones, and every American who suffered from her betrayal of the United States. "If you cannot love your country," he said to her, "at least you should do it not wrong. You decided to put the US in harms way; you must pay the penalty."

Judge Urbina then sentenced her to 300 months in prison (25 years), and waived the fine because there was no way she could pay it he said. She did have to pay \$100 for a special assessment fee for the Clerk of the Court. She forfeits any government contributions to her Thrift Savings Program, any interests, assets and property. Upon her release, she will be on five years probation and will be required to perform 500 hours of Community Service. She will undergo regular drug testing. Authorities will be allowed to do unannounced searches and checks of her computer including retrieval and copying all her data on hard drives and external drives. She must allow them to install hardware and software that will monitor her computer use and she must pay for this equipment herself. She is not allowed to possess or use any data encryption tools.

A daily log of everything she does on her computer must be written down. She will not be allowed to use any computers at home or at work that has an online service to the internet without prior approval. She cannot receive any benefits from foreign entities and cannot work for the US government or contractors nor foreign governments. Her income tax returns will be reviewed. She is to have no direct or indirect contact with foreign agents. She has a right to an appeal within ten days.

Cacheris said that his client requested prisons in either Tallahassee or Danbury. The prosecution had no objection and the judge agreed. (Federal Corrections Institutions in Tallahassee, FL or Danbury, Connecticut, see [Bureau of Prisons](#))



Judge Ricardo Urbina
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All in attendance rose as the judge left the chamber and Montes walked out with the marshals. She never looked back.

A last note, while a few reporters were in attendance in the courtroom, today the CI Centre has only been receiving calls from the media requesting comment about possible terrorism links to the Maryland serial sniper. As counterintelligence is more in our purview, we've

been telling them that a major spy was sentenced to prison today. Ana Montes was the Defense Intelligence Agency's top Cuba analyst.

For 16 years, the entire time she worked at DIA, she was a clandestine agent of the Cuban intelligence service, conducting clandestine spy tradecraft to pass classified U.S. government

Documents to Cuba. And she remains completely unrepentant about her actions. As DIA's senior Cuba analyst, she would have had regular contact with other senior Cuba analysts in the U.S. she would have had regular contact with other senior Cuba analysts in the U.S. Intelligence Community. A spy at this level and for this long is astounding. It also shows men aren't the only spies, Russia is not the only threat, and people don't always spy for money. This is an incredibly useful counterintelligence awareness case study, but unfortunately its coverage in the media has been eclipsed, first by 9/11 and now by the Maryland sniper. We hope that the government recognizes the importance of this case for counterintelligence and security awareness and will someday provide more information about her recruitment that led her to today-the first day of her next 25 years in prison.

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ANA BELEN MONTES' STATEMENT

Ana Belen Montes

Arrested Thursday,

Sentenced Wednesday, 16 October 2002 to 25 years in prison
[CI Centre coverage of sentencing](#)



Montes statement:

This is the statement read in federal court Wednesday by Ana Belen Montes, who received a 25-year jail sentence for a 16-year spying career for Cuba. Before her arrest in September 2001, Montes was the senior Cuba analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency.

"An Italian proverb perhaps best describes the fundamental truth I believe in: 'All the world is one country.' In such a 'world-country,' the principle of loving one's neighbor as much as oneself seems, to me, to be the essential guide to harmonious relations between all of our "nation-neighborhoods." This principle urges tolerance and understanding for the different ways of others. It asks that we treat other nations the way we wish to be treated --with respect and compassion. It is a principle that, tragically, I believe we have never applied to Cuba.

"Your honor, I engaged in the activity that brought me before you because I obeyed my conscience rather than the law. I believe our government's policy towards Cuba is cruel and unfair, profoundly unneighborly, and I felt morally obligated to help the

island defend itself from our efforts to impose our values and our political system on it. We have displayed intolerance and contempt towards Cuba for most of the last four decades. We have never respected Cuba's right to make its own journey towards its own ideals of equality and justice. I do not understand why we must continue to dictate how the Cubans should select their leaders, who their leaders cannot be, and what laws are appropriate in their land. Why can't we let Cuba pursue its own internal journey, as the United States has been doing for over two centuries?

"My way of responding to our Cuba policy may have been morally wrong. Perhaps Cuba's right to exist free of political and economic coercion did not justify giving the island classified information to help it defend itself. I can only say that I did what I

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thought right to counter a grave injustice.

"My greatest desire is to see amicable relations emerge between the United States and Cuba. I hope my case in some way will encourage our government to abandon its hostility towards Cuba and to work with Havana in a spirit of tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding. Today we see more clearly than ever that intolerance and hatred --by individuals or governments --spread only pain and suffering. I hope for a U.S. policy that is based instead on neighborly love, a policy that recognizes that Cuba, like any nation, wants to be treated with dignity and not with contempt. Such a policy would bring our government back in harmony with the compassion and generosity of the American people. It would allow Cubans and Americans to learn from and share with each other. It would enable Cuba to drop its defensive measures and experiment more easily with changes. And it would permit the two neighbors to work together and with other nations to promote tolerance and cooperation in our one 'world-country,' in our only 'world-homeland .'

The Miami Herald

June 16, 2002 Sunday ST EDITION

SECTION: A; Pg. 22

LENGTH: 552 words

HEADLINE: **Infiltration, seduction among Cuban spy tactics in U.S.**

BYLINE: TIM JOHNSON

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Ana Belen Montes' confession in March brought the latest evidence of how Fidel Castro's regime seeks to spy on the United States, targeting the Cuban exile community, Capitol Hill, the military and CIA, and universities, experts say.

Time after time, Cuba's Directorate of Intelligence has run double agents, letting them fall into U.S. hands, or wash up on U.S. shores, as presumed defectors.

After insinuating themselves into exile groups, Radio Marti or federal agencies, they would sow discord, or bolt back to Havana to publicly discredit the U.S. government.

Cuban spies based in the United States are "very smooth, very acculturated and really very, very professional," one retired counterintelligence official said.

They operate from the Cuban Interests Section in Washington and the huge Cuban mission to the United Nations in New York City, which has more than 70 accredited diplomats.

"I'll just flatly tell you that almost everyone of them are intelligence officers," the retired official said.

At Cuba's mission in New York City, intelligence gathering is such a principal task, another U.S. official said, that many of the Cuban personnel "frankly don't even know where the U.N. is. By the mid-1970s, Cuban operatives were gathering information not only for Havana but also to pass on to the Soviet spy agency, the KGB. "The Cubans were much more successful at bringing people aboard and gathering information," the official said. "They were Latin and they were kind of glamorous. We're much more open to Latins than we are to people with steel teeth and a Slavic accent.

Cuban intelligence agents practice literal and figurative seduction, spending months and even years looking for weak points in their targets, experts say.

"They investigate everything," said Francisco Avila, a former Cuban double agent who came clean in 1992 and now lives in South Florida. "Do you like to smoke? Do you like to fish,

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hunt? Go to the movies? Or maybe a man is a real womanizer, and they send a woman to seduce him."

Avila, who was tasked by Cuban intelligence with infiltrating Alpha 66, a Miami exile paramilitary group, voiced amazement at how many Cuban agents penetrated the group.

"One time, I was one of six people aboard a boat belonging to Alpha 66, and I looked around and realized that three of us were from (Cuban) state security," Avila said.

Before his break with Havana, Avila said, he would receive instructions in Miami every three months or from a contact, who would give him a large hollowed-out bolt with a paper inside. The paper would instruct him on how to meet his Cuban intelligence handler in New York City.

"It would say something like, 'We'll see each other in Queens at such and such an hour in front of a Kentucky Fried Chicken, , " Avila said. When Avila would show up there, "almost always it was the first secretary of the U.N. Interests Section" waiting for him.

The FBI counterintelligence unit has about 40 to 50 agents nationwide assigned to watch Cuban spies --not nearly enough to keep tabs on every Cuban diplomat who wanders the streets of New York, Washington and Miami.

"It's not like the movies," the security official said.

"You put two people out on somebody and they'll lose him. It's very hard to surveil somebody. "

The Miami Herald

June 16, 2002 Sunday F1 EDITION

SECTION: A; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 2461 words

HEADLINE: She led two lives; dutiful analyst, and spy for Cuba

BYLINE: TIM JOHNSON

DATELINE: PARKVILLE, Md.

BODY:

In a brief e-mail message laden with emotion, the mother of Ana Belen Montes --a top spy for Cuba --lays bare the anguish she feels over her daughter's plight. "We do not agree with what Ana did but I still love her very much," Emilia B. Montes wrote to a reporter. "She was my first born, a very good daughter who never gave me any heartaches until now. She is still a good, smart and loving person. She had the best intentions, [but] just went about it the wrong way."

Exactly how Ana Montes went the "wrong way" is not obvious at first glance, a worrisome phenomenon at a time when investigators are searching for telltale signs of alienation in order to spot potential terrorists.

Indeed, Montes appears to have enjoyed an all-American upbringing. But a more probing look reveals the contours of an emotional makeup that may have led her to betray her country --and even her family --to become the most important known spy for Cuba to penetrate the U.S. intelligence apparatus.

Meticulous and trim, the 45-year-old Montes seemed the antithesis of a rebel. She had climbed a career ladder at the super-secret Defense Intelligence Agency, becoming the most senior analyst on Cuba. She carefully saved her substantial salary, kept her apartment neat, went to the gym almost daily and kept to routine. She refrained from gossip, even with her most loyal friends. If anyone seemed safe and reliable, it was Ana Montes.

But somewhere along the way, Montes entered a labyrinth of mirrors where deceit and reality intermingle. When she emerged, even her own family did not recognize her.

"I'm still flabbergasted," her mother said in a brief telephone conversation, talking with more than a little reticence. "We waited and waited to find out it wasn't true."

No such luck. In March, Montes confessed in U.S. District Court to one count of conspiracy to commit espionage. She had become a crown jewel for the Cuban intelligence service, one of the most effective in the world. Experts say she spilled a flood of secrets to her Cuban handlers.

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"They wanted everything. They just sucked everything out of her, " said one security official knowledgeable about the case. .(Fidel) Castro trades in this kind of information. "

A LIFE OF PERIL

Clandestine activities

Close friends were stricken. They discovered that Ana Montes, who seemed to shun risk, led a life of enormous peril. She rose at odd hours to listen to high-frequency coded messages from Havana. She trooped from one pay phone to another to send beeper messages. And she disappeared on exotic vacations -- often alone.

"Her family is devastated, her reputation is ruined, and her money and all that is gone," said an old friend, who insisted on anonymity.

It is no ordinary family. Montes has a brother who works for the FBI in the Atlanta area and a sister who is a translator for the FBI in South Florida. The sister helped bring down a large Cuban spy ring, the so-called Wasp Network, last year.

Montes is now held in a secret location, where debriefers are assessing the damage she caused. The Justice Department says Montes began working for Cuban intelligence by 1985. They now know whether she was a "walk-in" who offered her services, or whether she was recruited or blackmailed to work for Havana. But they are not sharing what they know.

And they won't reveal it until Montes appears in September for sentencing. It is then that a judge will hand her a 25-year term, and five additional years of parole, if federal officials attest that she has cooperated fully.

NO SIGN OF ENRICHMENT

Motivation seemed to come from ideology and emotion.

By all indications, Montes did not receive a penny for her betrayal. She worked for Havana out of ideological conviction, dismay at U.S. policy, and perhaps an amalgam of emotions sown in adolescence along the leafy streets of this northern Baltimore suburb.

It is here that Montes began to battle most strongly with her father, Alberto L. Montes, a Freudian psychoanalyst who dealt sternly with his four children and tried to inculcate his conservative values in them.

"He was a very strict disciplinarian," recalled Emilia Montes, who later divorced her husband. "When I was young, people used to say that the children of psychiatrists have problems. They clashed. He was strong-willed, very much like her."

Dr. Montes, who was born in Puerto Rico in 1928, went to medical school in upstate New York, then joined the Army in 1956, going first to West Germany, where Ana was born, then

moving with his family to Topeka, Kan., for seven years. He specialized in adult psychiatry at the respected Menninger Clinic.

By the time the Montes family moved to the Baltimore suburbs in 1967, the father had quit the Army and the family appeared to live the American Dream. Dr Montes earned a large income in private practice, the family lived on a cul-de-sac in an upper middle-class neighborhood, and the children attended top-notch public schools.

"Dr. Montes was a good psychiatrist, very well regarded in the community," said a fellow psychiatrist, Jaime Lievano, who still lives in Baltimore. "He had specific training in Freudian analysis."

The family clung to its Puerto Rican roots, even as Ana Montes and her younger sister and two younger brothers stood out at the local Loch Raven High School for their Hispanic heritage.

"Look at the faces," Principal G. Keith Harmeyer said as he flipped through the school yearbook for 1975, when Ana Montes graduated. Only two other students had Hispanic surnames.

Next to her senior photo, Ana Montes noted that her favorite things were "summer, beaches, soccer, Stevie w., P.R., chocolate chip cookies, having a good time with fun people."

While Dr. Montes kept his psychiatric practice at a local clinic, his wife developed her own career as an investigator for a federal employment anti-discrimination office, and grew active in Hispanic community affairs.

It is there that Emilia Montes had a serious run-in with Cuban exiles.

"The Cubans and I had our encounters. They don't fight clean," she said, speaking with a candor that appears to be part of her feisty nature.

A SPAT WITH EXILES

Mother was involved in immigrant activism.

Even today, Hispanic community activists remember the spat in the mid-1970s, when Emilia Montes led a federation of Hispanic immigrants from all over Latin America in a quest for a slot in a Showcase of Nations city festival. A rival group of well-connected Cuban exiles said that it should win the slot.

Emilia Montes said, "This is not true. The Cubans don't represent everybody". "We've got more than just Cubans around here, said Javier Bustamante, a fellow activist.

"They had a knock-down, drag-out fight, " added Bustamante, who is from Spain.

Backed by the umbrella Federation of Hispanic Organizations, and speaking on her local radio program, Emilia Montes succeeded in defeating the Cuban exile group.

"She was out for the little guy," recalled Jose Ruiz, who is a city liaison with the Hispanic community. Chuckling, he added: "She was a character. She had her moments."

By 1977, when Ana Montes had left the family home and was attending the University of Virginia, the parents fell into an acrimonious divorce and custody battle for the two youngest children, Alberto M. and Juan Carlos.

The court awarded Mrs. Montes custody of the two sons, the family home and a 1974 Plymouth, and a small alimony.

If Ana Montes ever mended her troubled relationship with her father, it wasn't readily apparent.

"At one point, she actually wrote him a letter trying to make peace with her past," recalled a friend of Ana's from her time at the University of Virginia. "He wrote back. He was totally unapologetic. "

Dr. Montes eventually remarried, rejoined the Army and moved to the Hawaiian island of Oahu. He retired from the Army in 1995 with the rank of colonel, divorced his second wife and moved to South Florida, where he died of a heart attack two years ago.

Ana Montes graduated from the University of Virginia in 1979 with a degree in foreign affairs. She moved to Washington, D.C., where she enrolled in 1982 in a two-year master's degree program at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. She focused on Latin America. Her degree was not awarded until 1988.

While she was studying, Montes got a clerical job at the Department of Justice that required a security clearance. She moved to the Defense Intelligence Agency as a junior analyst, focusing on Nicaragua, in September 1985.

By then, she already was a spy for Cuba.

How the Cuban intelligence service enlisted Montes is the subject of endless speculation among Cuba watchers. Some say it was a romance. Others say it was blackmail. Still others, including her lawyer and her mother, say it was sympathy for a small nation in the shadow of a colossus.

"She felt sorry for the Cubans, " Emilia Montes said of her daughter. "It wasn't Castro. It was seeing them living in misery. She was very young and idealistic. "

Wherever the truth, Ana Montes rubbed elbows with scores of people inside and outside the Pentagon, on Capitol Hill and at the State Department, taking part in and eventually leading briefings on Cuba. Colleagues and acquaintances describe her as no-nonsense.

"She was an unusual person, " said an official who knew her casually and like many of her acquaintances declined to speak for attribution. "She could be very warm and engaging on a personal level. She was kind of witty. She had a very sharp mind. But when you're discussing work or in a work environment, she could be very aloof and dogmatic. "

PRESSURE TO MARRY

Boyfriend was employed by U.S. Southern Command

Montes dated occasionally, and like many daughters of Hispanic mothers came under pressure to find a partner and head to the altar.

'Her mom was on her all the time: 'Why aren't you married?' " recalled the old friend.

Montes did, in fact, have a boyfriend in recent times --Roger Corneretto, a civilian employee in Miami of the U.S. Southern Command, which oversees U.S. military operations in the hemisphere, including Cuba.

"She was going to get married," said Lilian Laszlo, a Baltimore resident and close friend of Emilia Montes.

Corneretto was transferred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff office in the Pentagon after Montes' arrest last year, shocked and grieving at the discovery of his girlfriend's double life.

Corneretto declined to talk with The Herald.

Montes is known to have traveled to New York City regularly, as well as to have taken overseas vacations alone to places like the Dominican Republic, where she may have received Cuban training to master the coded radio messages and computer decoding software that her espionage demanded.

How U.S. counterintelligence agents got onto Montes is not clear.

A former Cuban Interior Ministry cryptographer, Jose Cohen, who now lives in exile in South Florida, said he believes U.S. counterintelligence engineered a huge feat by cracking an encrypted Cuban message, perhaps to Montes.

"It is easier to win the lottery three times over than to break these codes," Cohen said.

APARTMENT SEARCHED

FBI reportedly found evidence on computer.

Whatever the tip-off, FBI agents 13 months ago searched Montes' apartment and surreptitiously copied the hard drive of her Toshiba laptop computer, recovering 11 pages of text between her and Cuban intelligence agents, court documents say. Montes' failure to fully erase the material appeared to be an act of carelessness unusual for her.

The Justice Department says Montes had turned over photos, documents and abundant classified material to Cuba. It says she revealed the identity of four undercover u.s. agents, handed over information about U.S. military games, and provided assessments to Cuba taken from the most top-secret internal files of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Montes, with a top-level clearance, had access to the Intelink computer network that connects about 60 federal intelligence, defense and civilian agencies involved in intelligence gathering and assessment.

"She had access to basically everything," the security official said. "You're talking about programs that cost millions of dollars to develop. And she could get anything. "

As she funneled secrets, Montes also molded debate about Cuba on Capitol Hill and at the Pentagon and the State Department. In 1998, she was a principal drafter of a Pentagon paper that concluded that Cuba no longer represented a military threat to the United States.

In 1999, Montes was a principal briefer on an inter-agency war-game-like exercise about Cuba that may have required her to review u.s. military capabilities toward Cuba should turmoil erupt on the island, one u.s. official said. Montes became a "vociferous" advocate of a controversial proposal to allow active U.S. military personnel into Cuba to develop relations with officers of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, the official said. Critics feared that such a plan would expose U.S. military personnel to possible recruitment or compromise by Cuban intelligence.

Normally, with a spy like Montes in their sights, FBI agents would shadow her for months, even years, with the intention of identifying her handlers and bringing down an entire network.

But nine days after the Sept. 11 terror attacks, the agents swooped in to arrest Montes, fearing that she represented an overriding security risk.

To this day, the Montes arrest has not generated the publicity of other major spy cases, such as the 1994 arrest of Aldrich Ames, a CIA employee whose betrayal of his country may have cost the lives of nine u.s. moles in the Soviet Union, and the early 2001 arrest of Robert Hanssen, a veteran FBI counterintelligence officer who earned \$1.4 million as an agent for Russia.

Some think Montes ranks in the league of major turncoats.

"You could make the case that the potential for damage was more severe than with either Hanssen or Ames," an official said. "She could have told them what, where and when (entual U.S. military action would occur], and it would cost a hell of a lot of lives. As it is, some of the victims are alive and suffering silently.

Montes' brothers and sisters declined to speak about her.

"I'll be happy to talk to you sometime down the road, but not right now," said Juan Carlos Montes, the youngest sibling at 40, who operates a restaurant in South Florida.

"I still have sleepless nights, " Montes' mother said. "Your precious child in handcuffs in a jail. I can't bear it."

Herald staff writer Juan O. Tamayo and researcher Elisabeth Donovan contributed to this report.

Front Page Magazine

CASTRO'S TOP SPY

March 29, 2002

BY Ronald Radosh

AN AP REPORT OF APRIL.. 10, 1998 PRESENTED AN UNUSUAL STORY. "The Pentagon received praise from an unlikely source," the article stated, "Cuban President Fidel Castro." What Castro was citing was a Pentagon intelligence review leaked to the press, which had concluded Cuba posed no serious military threat to the United States, due especially to a severely weakened Cuban military. The report, Castro said, was "an objective report by serious people." There was good reason for Castro to be pleased with the leaked report. It was prepared by the Defense Intelligence Agency in cooperation with other intelligence arms of the Government, and was written by Ana Belen Montes, Castro's top spy in the United States.

The argument in the Montes draft was repeated to Congress by Gen. Charles Wilhelm, commander of the US Southern Command based in Miami, when he commented on the report that same week. "I do not consider the current Cuban armed forces to be a threat to the United States," Wilhelm said, "it is a force that can no longer project itself beyond the boundaries of Cuba." In addition, Wilhelm said that no evidence existed that Cuba was trying to foment any instability in the Western Hemisphere, a conclusion challenged by many Cuba watchers, who blanched at the reports that the draft urged American and Cuban military cooperation in the region.

The first draft that Montes wrote, however, was so soft that it was toughened up by then Defense Secretary William Cohen. When Cohen sent the report to Congress in May of 1998, he stressed that although the Cuban military was itself no longer a serious threat to the US, Cuba still had the potential to make deadly biological weapons. "Cuba's current scientific facilities and expertise," Cohen said, "could support an offensive biological weapons program at least in the research and development stage." Moreover, Cohen expressed his concern that Castro could still use the island as a base for intelligence activities against the United States.

Montes, as Americans learned just two short weeks after the 9/11 terrorist attack, was a top level analyst and intelligence officer at the DIA, who was arrested by the FBI in mid-September at her intelligence office in the Bolling Air Force Base, and charged with conspiracy to commit espionage. Her colleagues, DIA spokesman Navy Lt. Commander James E. Brooks told me, were "stunned" at the news. Regarded as a consummate professional, virtually none of her colleagues ever guessed that she might be a spy. Nevertheless, Brooks argued that she did not fit the usual profile of a spy---which suggests, perhaps, that those responsible for counter-intelligence should not put such great stock on the usual profiles.

Last week, on March 19, Montes pleaded guilty to espionage, which the Justice Department's "Factual Proffer" in support of a guilty plea, noted that she had conducted for

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Cuba since 1985. The Proffer and the actual indictment offer a tantalizing hint at the extent of Montes' harm to the United States. Montes, who held security clearances of the highest level was in fact the DIA's chief analyst for Cuba. In that capacity, she effectively served as a Cuban double-agent, handing over top secret information to Castro's secret police, including "the identity of a covert United States intelligence officer as well as the planning and goals of the United States intelligence community with respect to Cuba." The understated legalese means that effectively, Cuba's DINA- its secret police- received virtually everything it needed to know about U.S. intelligence, including the names of three other US "agents as well as material classified as "Top Secret." In addition she gave the Cuban government classified reports, photos and other printed material. To help her with her work, in 1996 Cuban intelligence gave her a computer program for the encryption and decryption of messages.

Most recently, from April through May 2001, Montes communicated via a pager number provided by Cuban intelligence, to which she made long-distance untraceable calls from pay phones, using pre-paid calling cards. When the pager answered, Montes would "key in a short series of numbers that corresponded to general, pre-established messages, such as 'I received message,' or 'danger.'" Using short-wave radios, from which she received a series of random numbers --classic encrypted transmissions--she then decoded them later with the computer program given her by Cuban intelligence. The radio messages, broadcast on high frequencies, were sent during times Montes was instructed to be listening on a commercially purchased short-wave radio she had at home. Anything in writing was put on water soluble paper to be ready for quick destruction. Clearly, the Hollywood script is virtually writing itself.

Her most recent communication took place on September 16, five short days after 9/11. According to the indictment, "Montes used her position as an intelligence officer and, subsequently, a senior intelligence analyst, for the Defense Intelligence Agency, to gather writings, documents, materials and information, classified for reasons of national security, for unlawful communication, delivery and transmission to the government of Cuba." Montes was so intent on fulfilling her commitment to Castro that she refused promotion and other career advancement opportunities at the DIA in order to not lose access to classified information of particular interest to Cuban intelligence.

Montes was in a position to give Cuban intelligence lots of critical information they sought. At one point, she observed war-games taking place in Norfolk, Virginia, which meant that any contingency plans the US was preparing for dealing with Cuba in moments of crisis could have been reported to them instantly. Since the Mariel boatlift crisis, which Castro precipitated, US strategy planners have worried about the possibility of Castro repeating the episode with new dire consequences for our country. Any policies devised to help prevent this happening would have been given to Castro by Montes.

The actual indictment against Montes is that of "conspiracy to commit espionage," the exact same charge brought by the US Government against Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1950. That charge, which stems from the Espionage and Sedition Act of 1917, carries with it the possibility of a death sentence for anyone found guilty. So far in our nation's history, only the Rosenbergs received capital punishment for this offense when committed in peacetime. In their case, the prosecution specifically hoped that the threat of execution would lead either of the couple to break, and provide information that would allow the government to prosecute other members of the Rosenberg spy ring. Staunch Communist ideologues, the couple

opted to go to their death proclaiming their innocence, and to become martyrs in the pantheon of Communist heroes.

Like the Rosenbergs, Montes was also an ideologically committed supporter of a Communist regime, that of Fidel Castro. Her lawyer, Plato Cacheris, who seems to be the chosen counsel for most of the recent American spies for foreign powers, offered the press a predictable left-wing rationale for Montes' actions, which is obviously the approach Montes asked him to take. "She engaged in these activities," he said, "because of her belief that U.S. policy does not afford Cubans respect, tolerance and understanding." What Cacheris does not point out is that opponents of administration policy on Cuba have many different ways to argue for a change in American policy, other than betrayal of our own country and American agents to Fidel Castro's spy service. Moreover, Cacheris added that Montes "was motivated by her desire to help the Cuban people," and he stressed that she received no compensation. Evidently, aid to a repressive old-line Communist dictatorship is equated by her counsel to helping the Cuban people. And that she asked for no monetary compensation indicates that like Julius Rosenberg and Alger Hiss, spies of an era long past, her espionage was ideological in basis. She was, clearly, not the kin of Aldrich Arnes or Robert Hannsen, both of whom were motivated by the quest for money, or, in the case of Hannsen, deeply disturbed psychological reasons; But like Alger Hiss, Montes was in many ways the perfect spy. With access to top secret intelligence agency data, she could provide the Castro regime with material of the greatest value. And as an intelligence analyst responsible for providing information to be used by policy-makers, she worked both ends of the operation. In this capacity, she could also write the kind of reports that would influence the creation of a policy more favorable to the Castro regime than that advocated by anti- Castro hard-liners.

Unlike Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, Ana Montes is evidently not going to seek martyrdom, which is why little has been heard from Havana on her behalf since her indictment. Other recent Cuban spies, such as those arrested in Miami last year- the so- called Wasp's Nest group- have been the subject of rallies and protests in Cuba, and the defendants- some of whom escaped before arrest- are treated as heroes by the state sponsored Cuban media. The sixteen indicted members, like Montes, got their instructions via code delivered over short-wave radios. But their efforts- trying to infiltrate military bases and counting military air take-offs in Florida, hardly compared to the high level data provided by Montes. But since some of them cooperated with authorities, it is possible that Montes was found out from information they supplied.

(W ASP network members were among those who infiltrated Brothers to the Rescue, one of whose planes was shot down in February of 1996 with the result that four of the anti- Castro Cubans in the group were killed.)

Moreover, the government' s agreement with Montes rests on her continued cooperation, and depends upon whether or not she provides complete answers to all the queries they make of her. Resting over her head is that death sentence. FBI press spokesman Chris Murray confirmed to me that the legal agreement being honored depends upon her performance, and even though press reports indicate that Justice is not asking for a death sentence, any unsatisfactory performance by Montes would lead immediately to reconsideration of the plea bargain by the Justice Department.

One unanswered question is how and why Montes developed her pro-Castro views. Of Puerto Rican descent, Montes attended the University of Virginia, and then received her M.A. degree at the prestigious School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins, where few people seem to have any distinct impressions of her. Riordan Roett, director of Western Hemisphere Studies, e-mailed me that he has only "vague" remembrances of her, even though she took two of his courses. Before her arrest, Montes was a regular participant at the Georgetown University Caribbean Project discussions of US-Cuba relations, where again, participants such as Wayne Smith, Gillian Gunn Clissold and William LeoGrande have all been quoted in different press stories about how little she spoke up and what a low keyed presence she played. It is apparent, however, that Montes was in close contact with those members of the policy-making community who strongly favor lifting the US embargo on Cuba, and who are generally regarded as soft-liners. Their views were most strongly reflected when Secretary of State Colin Powell, testifying before Congress last year, said that Castro has "done good things for his people," and agreed that, "He's no longer the threat he was." If Castro wanted to supply those already inclined to moderate US policy towards his regime with information, what better place to do it than have his own agent within the DIA regularly attend gatherings at which those inclined to the soft line met, where her analysis clearly would meet a welcome reception.

The question left to address is whether or not the Montes assessment about the nature of the Cuban threat is correct. The possibility exists, of course, that even though she was a Cuban spy, her report on the weak state of the Cuban military is accurate, and that Castro's Cuba no longer poses any kind of danger to American security. Sadly, that, however, amounts to so much wishful thinking. Senator Bob Graham, Chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, calling Montes' actions "traitorous," points out that "the very fact that sensitive national security information...was compromised" in and of itself is "an indication of Fidel Castro's continuing desire to undermine the U.S. government and the security of our people." Graham's early assessment, issued after Montes' plea bargain, is worth paying attention to. Americans should recall that Cuba remains on the State Department list of nations that support terrorism, and last May 10, Castro spoke at Tehran University, where the AP reported, he told Iranians that the United States was "an imperialist king" that "will finally fall, just as your king was overthrown." He also swore that working together, the two countries would "bring America to its knees." His tour also took him to Libya and Syria. Some, of course, will attribute such statement to mere rhetoric, meant to bolster Fidel Castro's standing as a leader of a world revolution against the United States.

However, last December, Sinn Fein chief Gerry Adams spoke from Cuba on a solidarity trip, lending his voice to the call of those who seek an end to the US embargo. Adams' call was ironic, given that the previous August the Colombian military arrested three IRA explosive experts who were training the Communist FARC guerrillas in practice of detonation of car bombs. One of them, Niall Connolly, Adams admitted, was Sinn Fein's long-time representative in Havana. And with Adams standing next to him, Castro praised IRA hunger strikers of the past, as another Cuban official proclaimed US action in Afghanistan to be a "calculated massacre of civilians." One has to wonder, as obviously Senator Graham does, just who is Castro sharing the information he received from Ana Montes with?

Ronald Radosh is author of *Commies: A Journey Through the Old Left, the New Left and the Leftover Left*, (Encounter Books, 2001.) and is a columnist for FrontPageMagazine.com.

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HEADLINE: Pentagon's Top Cuba Expert Pleads Guilty to Espionage

BYLINE: By TIM GOLDEN

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, March 19

BODY:

Ana B. Montes, an intelligence analyst who was the Pentagon's top expert on Cuba, pleaded guilty to an espionage charge today, admitting that she spied for the Cuban government for 16 years because she opposed United States policy toward Havana.

Ms. Montes, 45, acknowledged in Federal District Court here that she had revealed the identities of four American undercover intelligence officers and provided the Cuban authorities with reams of other secret and top-secret military and intelligence information.

She was not paid for her efforts, lawyers in the case said, and was just reimbursed for some travel expenses.

"Ms. Montes engaged in the activity that resulted in this charge because of her moral belief that United States policy does not afford Cubans respect, tolerance and understanding," her lead lawyer, Plato Cacheris, said in a statement. "Ms. Montes was motivated by her desire to help the Cuban people and did not receive any financial benefits. "

Under her plea bargain, Ms. Montes will be sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment and 5 years' probation on a single count of conspiracy to commit espionage. She is obliged to submit to extensive debriefings and lie-detector tests by American intelligence and law-enforcement officials who will try to assess the damage she caused to national security.

The death penalty, although contemplated under the law, was never seriously threatened by the prosecutors, lawyers said.

Ms. Montes's plea confirms the most serious penetration of the United States intelligence community ever by President Fidel Castro's Communist government. It was met by silence from Cuban diplomats here.

"There is no comment, " a spokesman for the Cuban diplomatic mission, Luis M. Fernandez, said. The plea was announced a day after an appeal by Havana for greater

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cooperation with Washington. In a flurry of official statements on Monday, the Cuban authorities said they hoped to reach new accords with Washington on migration, drug control and fighting terrorism.

A spokesman for the State Department, Richard A. Boucher, acknowledged today that Cuba had taken steps to cooperate with the United States on law-enforcement matters in recent years. But Mr. Boucher said that any more formal accords would not be possible until Cuba demonstrated "a willingness to work across the board with us on law-enforcement issues."

Such a commitment, he said, was "completely absent. "

Ms. Montes's case was resolved two months after the last of 10 Cuban intelligence officers and agents were sentenced on espionage charges in federal court in Miami.

Law-enforcement officials declined to say whether the case of the Miami spies, known as the Wasp network, was linked to Ms. Montes's. The officials said no harm befell the American intelligence officers whose identities Ms. Montes had betrayed.

The assistant F.B.I. director in charge of the Washington field office, Van A. Harp, described the episode as "a classic espionage case" unraveled by careful counterintelligence work. Starting in December 2000, officials said, Federal Bureau of Investigation agents investigating Ms. Montes placed her under surveillance as she shuttled in a Toyota sedan between her house near the Washington zoo and her office at the Defense Intelligence Agency analysis center at Bolling Air Force Base.

Officials said the agents surreptitiously copied the hard drive of a refurbished laptop computer that Ms. Montes used to encrypt and decrypt the messages that she exchanged with Cuban intelligence officers and recovered messages that documented those contacts.

In other searches of her apartment, the agents found a portable shortwave radio that Ms. Montes used to listen to coded messages from the Cubans and numeric codes that could be used to send messages like "danger" to a pager number used by intelligence officers assigned to the Cuban mission to the United Nations. The codes were written on water-soluble paper that could be quickly destroyed if necessary.

Still, Ms. Montes's story is in many ways a new chapter in the annals of American espionage. Born on a United States military base in Germany to Puerto Rican parents, Ms. Montes was raised in suburbs of Topeka, Kan., and Baltimore before attending the University of Virginia. She received a master's in international relations from the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies in Washington in 1988 and worked briefly for the Justice Department before joining the D.I.A., the Pentagon's intelligence arm, in September 1985.

By then, court documents show, she was already working for the Cuban Directorate of Intelligence, but officials would not say how or when she was recruited.

Friends and former colleagues of Ms. Montes said she was extremely discreet about her political beliefs, which many people had guessed were moderately conservative.

The New York Times, March 20, 2002

At the Defense Intelligence Agency, she worked first on Nicaraguan issues in the Reagan administration campaign to oust the Sandinista government and moved to Cuban affairs after the conflicts in Central America ended.

She was widely viewed by intelligence officers and policy makers as a first-rate analyst. She was selected for the Exceptional Analyst Program in 1992 and later traveled to Cuba to study how the military adapted to the economic collapse after Soviet-era subsidies had ended.

In 1998, officials said, Ms. Montes wrote the first draft of a widely noted Defense Department report that held that Cuba no longer posed a significant military threat to the United States. But the final report, which provoked outrage from Cuban-American legislators, was a consensus product of Cuba analysts from across the American intelligence community.

In her striped prison jumpsuit, Ms. Montes looked pale and thin from months of solitary confinement. Asked by Judge Ricardo M. Urbina about the accusations against her, she replied firmly, "Those statements are true and correct."

Under her plea, she forfeits government contributions to her pension, but with time discounted for good behavior, she could be released after a little more than 20 years. She is to be sentenced on Sept. 24.



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Assessment of Ana Belen Monte's Influence

Presentation by Dr. Emilio-Adolfo Rivero January 24, 2002

If there is an undisputable truth about Fidel Castro is that he possesses the Midas touch in reverse, he makes gold disappear. Cuba has become, under his rule, a financial black hole, a maelstrom where unlimited amounts of resources vanish without leaving trace. One could mention the 100 billion dollars in Soviet aid, that no one even remembers in Cuba nowadays. Those were subsidies aimed at supporting a political ally. Aside from that, Russia, as heir to the Soviet Union, demands payment of debts to the tune of around thirty billions dollars. Other credit institutions, from traditionally capitalist countries, try to recover loans made to Castro of about eleven billion dollars. It's worth mentioning at this point that Castro stopped payments of Cuba' international debt in the Summer of 1986, when the Soviet Union still had four or five year to go, and was still providing five billion dollars a year to the Cuban dictator. All that has nothing to do with Castro's personal wealth, which most analysts deem huge, even by international standards.

Why then, the increased enthusiasm of many American entrepreneurs who, escorted by U .S. senators and representatives, are pushing for the end of the embargo and establishment of commercial links with Castro? There is, of course, on the part of business people, the illusion of possible profits. And on the part of politicians, the usual desire of pleasing constituents and campaign contributors. That's normal and evident and needs not to be discussed. Castro counts on that and he certainly knows how to play his hand. There is another aspect, though, that deserves our attention.

For many years, Ana Belen Montes, a senior analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency, was in charge of the Cuban case. As such, she worked in direct and close contact with U.S. policy makers and intelligence and political analysts, briefed legislators on Capitol Hill and had access to top confidential information in different fields. She was an important piece in developing policies regarding Cuba. Several months ago she was arrested, accused of being a spy working for Castro. It would be normal for investigations to be centered on possible Ana Belen Montes's links within different branches of the U. S. Government. We think it's important that investigations be expanded to the Republican and Democratic parties structures, for it was known of Castroists activities, within the two parties, during the 2000 electoral campaign.

It will be difficult to asses, in full detail, all the damage Ana Belen Montes has done to our intelligence services and how she has disrupted U.S. efforts to develop a rational and effective policy towards Castro. But most difficult of all will be to determine how we are still influenced by the concepts, ideas, strategies and tactics which she planted in the intelligence and political

environments. It's the opinion of some, ours included, that her work still influences U.S. stance vis-a-vis Castro.

When we put this in hemispheric perspective and think of Castro's influence throughout Latin America, his being a founder of the Sao Paulo Forum, mentor to President Chavez in Venezuela, and close ally of Lulo da Silva in Brasil it becomes obvious that we should be very much concerned about present efforts aimed at developing Castro's contacts and influence within the U.S.

We beg of you to ask from your Senators and Representatives:

- 1) To request from the appropriate government agencies, particularly within the intelligence community, assessments on Ana Belen Monte's success in influencing U S. policies towards Castro's regime, and in what fields that influence could still be present.
- 2) To request from the intelligence community investigations and assessments of possible Castro's infiltration within the structures and activists of the Republican and Democratic parties, as a result of Ana Belen Montes's activities.

We thank you for your attention

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HEADLINE: Labels of Analyst Varied, But 'Spy' Came as a Surprise

BYLINE: By CHRISTOPHER MARQUIS

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, Sept. 29

BODY:

A few days after the Sept. 11 terrorist attack, Ana Belen Montes, a top Defense Department intelligence analyst, sent an e-mail note to an old friend saying she was all right and had not known anyone who died at the Pentagon.

"I could see the Pentagon burning from my office," she wrote. "Nonetheless, it pales next to the World Trade Center. Dark days ahead. So much hate and self-righteousness. "

The days darkened quickly for Ms. Montes. A week later, federal agents charged her with spying for Cuba. She is the highest-ranking official ever accused of espionage at the Defense Intelligence Agency, which, as a sister agency to the C.I.A., handles analysis for the Pentagon.

The arrest, on Sept. 21, left her friends and colleagues at a loss to explain what might have motivated her to risk everything, should the charges prove true. Friends described Ms. Montes, who is 44 and single, as a loyal companion, a doting aunt and an avid traveler. She had no evident money problems, and was apparently content dating a man who either was in the military or did business at the Pentagon, they said.

She was warm and funny, friends said, and seemed apolitical, even back in college.

"I can't picture her being involved in something like this, " said Lisa A. Huber of Louisville, Ky., who attended the University of Virginia with Ms. Montes and received the e-mail message. "It goes against everything I know about her. She has a lot of integrity. "

Ms. Montes, the D.I.A. 's top intelligence analyst for Cuba since 1992, left a different impression among colleagues. She came off as rather severe, they said; at meetings, she sat rigidly and rarely spoke.

"She was a very strange person, very standoffish, extraordinarily shy, " an American diplomat said. But professionally, Ms. Montes seemed above reproach. She spoke fluent

Spanish, and in 1990 she was tapped to brief Nicaragua's new president, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, about the Cuban-backed Sandinista military.

In 1992 or 1993, she pulled off what seemed to be an intelligence coup. She traveled to Cuba and interviewed Cuban generals about economic reforms. In 1998, she helped draft a widely cited analysis that found that Cuba's much diminished military posed no strategic threat. Last week, she briefed top Pentagon policy makers on Cuba.

Despite her immersion in Cuba issues, virtually no one in the Cuba policy community --two dozen officials, academics, non-governmental advocates and Congressional aides --recalls her venturing an opinion on American policy toward Havana.

The F.B.I. affidavit said Ms. Montes, who had a high-level security clearance, spied for Cuba for at least five years. She identified at least one American undercover agent to the Cubans, disclosed a top secret intelligence-gathering program and reported on American training in the Caribbean, the F.B.I. said.

Current and former American officials say she was in a position to tell Havana virtually everything the intelligence community knew about Cuba's military and might even have disclosed American contingency plans for taking the island by force.

"I would think, if damage was done, it would be about what she learned about the U.S., how it was militarily prepared vis-a-vis Cuba," said Richard Nuccio, President Bill Clinton's special adviser on Cuba.

Alberto R. Coll, a top Pentagon official in the first Bush administration, said that the damage could be multiplied if Cuba shared stolen intelligence with other governments hostile to the United States. Ms. Montes had access to a daily synopsis of American intelligence worldwide.

If the Havana government "wanted to earn points with the Chinese, maybe Iraq, Iran, Libya, it would not be surprising," said Dr. Coll, now dean of the Naval War College in Rhode Island. "Cuba has political ties with all those countries."

Intelligence officials said they had no evidence of such sharing. But some analysts said the prospect might have compelled the authorities to arrest Ms. Montes within 10 days of the attacks. She had been under F.B.I. surveillance since May.

According to the F.B.I., Ms. Montes received numeric messages from Cuba by shortwave radio, which she decoded on her home computer, and replied in code by telephoning a pager number from pay phones.

The authorities have declined to say how they came to suspect Ms. Montes.

Ms. Montes's detention hearing at Federal District Court in Washington is scheduled for Oct. 4. Tony Miles, her public defender, did not respond to requests for an interview.

LOAD-DATE: September 30, 2001

LEVEL 1- 204 OF 471 STORIES

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September 29, 2001 Saturday FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FRONT; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 1357 words

HEADLINE: CUBA SPY SUSPECT WAS RISING INTO SENIOR INTELLIGENCE RANKS

BYLINE: TIM JOHNSON, tjohnsonEkrwashington.com

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Before her arrest as a spy for Cuba last week, Ana Belen Montes was rising rapidly into the senior ranks of the U.S. intelligence community and appeared to have made a direct impact on U.S policy toward the island, according to a variety of sources who knew or worked with the 44-year-old defense analyst.

Her job allowed Montes to work with dozens of policymakers and intelligence analysts. She conducted briefings on Capitol Hill, regularly met with CIA counterparts, and had access to the Intelink computer network of secret intelligence reports on a gamut of issues.

Her most recent effort, according to these sources, involved an intelligence appraisal that attempted to soften a 1999 ground-breaking Pentagon assessment that declared Cuba no longer a threat to the United States militarily.

The portrait that emerges from talks with colleagues and acquaintances is of a woman who was often quiet, sometimes prickly and stand-offish in bearing, but apparently in a position to do considerable harm.

"There has not been what is called an assessment of damage of what she might have known and been able to compromise by making it available to the Cubans," said Bob Graham, the Florida Democrat who chairs the Senate Intelligence Committee.

"The offense that she committed is a capital offense," Graham told The Herald's editorial board Friday. Graham said several months may elapse before prosecutors determine if Montes will provide details about the extent of her alleged espionage to avoid the death penalty.

Other sources believe her role was very harmful. As the highest-level accused spy for Cuba, Montes did "substantial damage" to the United States, and probably knew the identities of U.S. spies in Cuba, one former intelligence officer said.

Another said her arrest shows that Cuba's foreign intelligence apparatus is "very sophisticated and very aggressive. "

The Miami Herald September 29, 2001 Saturday FINAL EDITION

In 2000, Montes took part in inter-agency briefings during the seven-month international saga over the custody of Elian Gonzalez, the young castaway from Cuba.

As a senior intelligence analyst on Cuba for the Defense Intelligence Agency, Montes traveled to Havana, first in 1993 on a CIA-paid leave to study the Cuban military, again in January 1998 during Pope John Paul II's visit, and perhaps other times, colleagues say.

One of the mysteries surrounding the case is what drove Montes to commit her alleged betrayal of the United States. She lived in an apartment -not beyond her means -in a leafy, residential neighborhood of northwest Washington popular with professionals.

Colleagues offer sharply differing assessments of her ability.

"She was superb," said one senior retired intelligence officer. Another dismissed her as "very weak" and prone to depression. Laughter was foreign to her.

"She's certainly not a warm person," said Edward Gonzalez, a retired UCLA professor who knew her. "She is not a happy person. She was always scowling."

The daughter of a military psychologist from Puerto Rico, Montes was born in Germany and educated at top schools in the United States. She spoke English and Spanish beautifully. She obtained a master's degree from the prestigious School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

NEVER GOT TOO CLOSE

Though she knew many people, she left little wake.

"We're trying to reconstruct who her friends were, and we can't," said Riordan Roett, director of Western Hemisphere Studies at the university. "I took a look at her transcript and she took two of my classes." Even so, Roett said he only "vaguely" can recall Montes.

In 1985, Montes got a job as a junior analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency, which provides the Pentagon with military and political analysis. A supervisor there at the time, who spoke on condition of anonymity, described Montes as introverted.

"She was very private. She never attended parties. When we had office parties, she might show up for only a little while." he said.

During her first years, Montes worked on issues related to Central America.

"When I was posted to Nicaragua in 1990," said a former State Department diplomat who knows Montes, "she was part of a team of two or three who came down to brief [President Violeta] Chamorro on the military apparatus."

Chamorro, a widow, was struggling to deal with the Sandinista People's Army, which was commanded by the brother of Daniel Ortega, the Sandinista president she upset in 1990 elections.

By then, Montes seemed to lead a charmed professional life.

In 1992, Montes was plucked by the CIA along with a handful of intelligence analysts who were deemed exceptional talents worthy of a year-long sabbatical at the Center for the Study of Intelligence. After a trip to Cuba, Montes published a CIA paper in 1993 on the Cuban military's efforts to adopt Western managerial tactics to cope with the island nation's economic crisis.

"I found her study useful," said Gonzalez, who has co-authored reports for the Pentagon on U.S.-Cuba policy. "It shed light on an aspect of the Cuban military that I didn't know about."

Some of her former colleagues are shocked to learn she may have been a turncoat.

"It's a huge puzzle," says a former senior CIA officer who had frequent contact with her. "She was considered a very well-respected analyst. She had a superb record. There was no agenda that she was pushing." He paused a moment and repeated: "She was superb. I hope you can find her motivation [for her alleged betrayal] because I'd like to know what it is."

Unlike the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency does not require its analysts to undergo regular polygraph tests to ensure they remain loyal, several sources said.

In its criminal complaint, the FBI said it believes Montes betrayed a U. S. intelligence officer working in Cuba. Intelligence sources said no harm befell the U.S. officer. The complaint also said Montes may have begun spying for Havana in 1996.

If so, said Richard Nuccio, a White House advisor on Cuba at the time, Montes would have been positioned to pass detailed analysis to Havana of U.S. military capabilities following the Cuban shootdown in February 1996 of two small aircraft belonging to the Brothers to the Rescue exile group.

At the time, the White House asked the Pentagon to review scenarios that included the bombing of Cuban runways, and other possible U.S. military action.

"Going through that review would have been very useful to a Cuban spy," Nuccio said.

BROAD ACCESS

Montes had a security clearance that allowed her broad access to documents from several intelligence agencies, not only CIA, and not only on Cuba, although that remained her focus. She attended sessions of Georgetown University's Cuba Study Group, a regular gathering of 70 or so scholars, intelligence analysts and others involved professionally on issues related to Cuba.

"I don't recall her ever expressing an opinion in that study group, and asking questions only once or twice" said Wayne S. Smith, a former U.S. diplomat in Cuba and senior fellow at the Center for International Policy. While Cuba has made no public pronouncement about Montes' arrest, Smith said Cuban

diplomats in Washington privately justified running spies like her in the United States.

"One of the Cubans at the Interest Section was saying the other day, "You have people you run [as spies] in Cuba. We have to know what your plans are. We have to know what kind of operations you are running against us," Smith said in an interview.

After her trip to Cuba in early 1998, Montes helped the Pentagon settle on a reassessment concluding that Cuba was too weak after the fall of the Soviet Union to present a military threat to the United States.

Montes' conclusion in the reassessment was toughened up at the Pentagon.

"The original version was much softer," said a source on a Capitol Hill intelligence committee.

Montes regularly briefed officers at the U.S. Southern Command in Miami, which oversees military operations in Latin America and the Caribbean, two sources said.

LEVEL 1- 2 OF 28 STORIES

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September 23, 2001, Sunday, Late Edition -Final

SECTION: Section 1A; Page 32; Column 1; National Desk

LENGTH: 486 words

HEADLINE: Spy Betrayed Agents to Cuba, Officials Say

BYLINE: By CHRISTOPHER MARQUIS

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, Sept. 22

BODY:

The Pentagon's top intelligence analyst for Cuba, accused of spying for the Havana government, identified American agents to Cuban officials and revealed details about a top secret intelligence gathering system, government officials said today.

The analyst, Ana Belen Montes of the Defense Intelligence Agency, was charged on Friday with providing secret information to Cuba for at least five years.

One indication of the level of trust that Ms. Montes enjoyed in Washington was a trip to Cuba she took in 1998 with two senior aides to Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, a fierce foe of President Fidel Castro of Cuba. Mr. Helms was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at that time.

Ms. Montes is the highest American official accused of spying for Cuba. The case could go far in explaining how efforts by the United States to penetrate Cuba's tightly controlled society were thwarted in the last decade.

Ms. Montes, the chief Cuba analyst since 1992, was in a position to know "90 percent of what we're doing in Cuba on an intelligence front and everything we know about Cuba," said an official who follows Cuba. "It's the crown jewels, if you will. "

Among those secrets was an intelligence-gathering operation known as a "special access program" that was so secret that the F. B. I. withheld its details in the criminal complaint. In a message that the F.B.I. partly recovered from her home computer, Ms. Montes said she and one colleague were "the only ones in my office who know about the program," the complaint said.

Ms. Montes also informed the Havana government when undercover American intelligence agents visited Cuba, compromising their contacts on the island, officials said.

Ms. Montes, who is 44 and single, was a fixture in foreign policy circles related to Cuba. Born at an American military base in Nuremberg, Germany, she graduated from the University of Virginia in 1979 and received a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in 1988, the complaint said. In 1985, she was hired by the Defense Intelligence Agency, which provides Pentagon planners with information about foreign countries.

In 1990, Ms. Montes was one of several military intelligence officials who briefed Violeta Chamorro, then the new president of Nicaragua, about the activities and assets of the Cuban-backed Sandinista military, one participant in the briefing said.

Ms. Montes communicated with Cuban intelligence officials through coded computer and telephone contacts, the complaint said. She received instructions in numeric signals by short-wave radio broadcasts, it said.

The F.B.I. began watching her in May and built its case against her largely from materials retrieved from her home computer.

Appearing before a United States magistrate in Washington on Friday, Ms. Montes entered no plea. She is being held without bond.

LEVEL 1- 6 OF 28 STORIES

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September 23, 2001, Sunday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. AO2

LENGTH: 976 words

HEADLINE: Analyst Charged With Spying for Cuba; Woman Passed Classified Information on Military Exercises, FBI Says

BYLINE: Bill Miller and Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writers

BODY:

The Defense Intelligence Agency's senior analyst for matters involving Cuba was arrested at her office yesterday and accused of providing classified information about military exercises and other sensitive operations to the Cuban government.

Federal prosecutors said Ana Belen Montes, 44, of Northwest Washington, was working for the Cuban intelligence service while on the U.S. government payroll. The FBI, which had been tailing Montes for months, surprised her at work yesterday morning at Bolling Air Force Base and charged her with conspiracy to deliver U.S. national defense information to Cuba, a capital offense.

A few hours later, Montes sat silently in U.S. District Court as prosecutors said she "knowingly compromised national defense information" and harmed the United States. A magistrate judge ordered her jailed without bond pending a hearing Wednesday. He also put Montes on a suicide watch at the request of prosecutors.

"This is a clandestine agent for the Cuban intelligence service," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronald L. Walutes Jr. "This has been going on for quite some time."

Established 40 years ago, the Defense Intelligence Agency today has more than 7,000 military and civilian employees around the world, with its headquarters at Bolling, in Washington. Its job is to produce military intelligence about foreign countries in support of U.S. planning and operations. One of the DIA's first successes was its role in the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

Montes began work at the DIA in 1985 and was assigned to analyze Cuban matters seven years later. As the DIA's senior analyst for Cuba, Montes would have dealt regularly with Cuba watchers from other agencies in the U.S. intelligence community, most particularly from the CIA and the State Department's Intelligence and Research Bureau.

In a court affidavit, FBI agent Stephen A. McCoy said authorities determined that Montes was passing details "about a particular Special Access Program related to the national defense of the United States." An intelligence source

said that probably referred to a highly classified intelligence collection system being employed to gather information either by satellite or other technical or human capability. Another of her alleged disclosures, the affidavit said, was the identity of a U.S. intelligence officer "who was present in an undercover capacity, in Cuba." Although the Cubans apparently did not arrest the individual, the affidavit indicated that "the Cuban government was able to direct its counter-intelligence resources" against the officer.

At another time, the affidavit said, Montes informed the Cubans that "we have noticed" the location, number and type of certain Cuban military weapons in Cuba. She also allegedly shared information about a 1996 war games exercise.

"This has been a very important investigation, because it does show our national defense information is still being targeted by the Cuban intelligence service," said Van A. Harp, assistant director in charge of the FBI's Washington field office.

A senior intelligence official shared that assessment, saying, "It is very serious. " He added that "it is still too early to say how much damage she may have done." The official pointed out, however, that any information received by Cuba then could have been shared with other foreign governments, causing further harm.

A DIA spokesman declined to comment. The agency cooperated in the FBI's investigation. An official at Cuba's diplomatic mission in Washington declined to discuss the case.

Montes, a U.S. citizen born at a U.S. military installation in Germany, is single and lived alone in an apartment in the 3000 block of Macomb Street NW, authorities said. The FBI searched her residence yesterday and also got a warrant to comb through her 2000 Toyota Echo, a safe-deposit box and her office.

Authorities declined to say what led them to focus on Montes or how they believed she became associated with the Cuban government. They said she communicated with her Cuban handlers via shortwave radios, computer diskettes and pagers, methods employed by a Cuban spy ring based in Florida --known as the Wasp Network --that attempted to infiltrate Cuban exile organizations and U.S. military installations.

Seven people have been convicted of being part of that organization, including a husband and wife who pleaded guilty yesterday. In charging documents and other court papers, authorities did not directly link Montes to the Florida activities.

According to the FBI's affidavit, the Cuban intelligence service often communicates with overseas agents by broadcasting encrypted messages at high frequencies via shortwave radio. The messages typically are conveyed in a series of numbers and transcribed into Spanish text by a computer program.

The FBI obtained court approval to surreptitiously enter Montes's apartment in May and found a shortwave radio and earpiece as well as a laptop computer, the affidavit said.

Agents secretly copied the computer's hard drive and restored text that had been deleted, providing the foundation for many of the

The Washington Post, September 23, 2001

allegations, the document added.

Since May, agents have followed Montes as she made brief calls on pay telephones outside the National Zoo, gas stations and other locations in Northwest Washington and Maryland, apparently sending encrypted messages to pagers, the affidavit said.

Before joining the DIA, Montes worked in the Justice Department's Office of Information and Privacy in the early 1980s. She is a 1979 graduate of the University of Virginia and received a master's degree in 1988 from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

Staff writers David A. Fahrenthold and Martin Weil and Metro researcher Bobbye Pratt contributed to this report.

LEVEL 1- 7 OF 28 STORIES

Copyright 2001 The Washington Post, The Washington Post

September 23, 2001, Sunday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. CO1

LENGTH: 910 words

HEADLINE: Area Cubans Relieved By Charges In Spy Case; Arrest Proves Castro Is a Threat, Groups Say

BYLINE: Sylvia Moreno, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

Cuban American groups yesterday applauded the arrest of a top-level Defense Intelligence Agency analyst on charges of spying for Cuba, asserting that her alleged actions could help terrorists and bring further harm to the United States.

"Cuba, in my analysis, shares that information and uses it to ingratiate itself and prove its utility to other enemies of the United States," said Jose Cardenas, executive director of the Washington office of the Cuban American National Foundation, a lobbying group for Cuban exiles.

"In light of the current situation that the country finds itself in, it's one more clarion call," Cardenas added, citing Cuban President Fidel Castro's ties with Libya, Iraq, Syria and other nations deemed antagonistic toward the United States.

Ana Belen Montes, 44, of Northwest Washington, was arrested Friday morning at her office at Bolling Air Force Base on charges of conspiracy to deliver u.s. national defense information, a crime punishable by death. The DIA senior analyst is being held without bond pending a hearing Wednesday.

Prosecutors have accused Montes of working for Cuba's intelligence service and providing classified information to Cuba about U.S. military exercises and other sensitive operations.

"I commend the federal authorities for stepping in now and arresting that spy at this very delicate moment when the U.S. is embarking on a worldwide terrorist campaign," Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.) said yesterday. "She had access to extraordinarily, highly classified information, and not just about Cuba. "

Montes began working at the DIA in 1985. Seven years later, she was assigned to analyze Cuban matters. As the agency's senior analyst for Cuba, she would have had dealings with Cuba watchers in the intelligence community, including the CIA and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

"It's a very serious case," said a federal official familiar with the arrest. "She had access to a great deal of classified information."

Montes is one of more than a dozen people arrested in the United States since September 1998 on charges of spying for Cuba. Most of the other arrests were made by the FBI in Florida and were of suspects connected to a spy ring dubbed the Wasp Network, which attempted to infiltrate Cuban exile organizations and U.S. military installations.

The arrest complaint against Montes did not directly link her to the ring, but it did allege that she communicated with her Cuban handlers via shortwave radios, computer diskettes and pagers --methods used by the Wasp Network.

One law enforcement source said investigators believe that Montes started spying in 1996. She had been under surveillance by the FBI for several months. She head of the Center for a Free Cuba in Washington said that her arrest validates the concerns of the exile community and some elected officials about Cuban espionage operations in the United States.

"When members of Congress raise this issue, the response from some policy quarters is that Castro is not a threat and that the only thing they're spying on is the exile community," Frank Calzon said. "Now we have a case in which a fairly important intelligence officer has been grabbed and who allegedly has been working for the Cuban government."

Montes, a U.S. citizen who was born on a military installation in Germany, is a graduate of the University of Virginia and the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. She lived alone in a cooperative apartment building in the 3000 block of Macomb Street NW.

In May, according to an FBI affidavit, agents obtained court approval to enter her apartment, where they found a shortwave radio, an earpiece and a laptop computer. Agents copied the computer's hard drive and restored what had been deleted. They also followed Montes as she made calls on pay phones outside the National Zoo and at other locations in the city and in Maryland, sending encrypted messages to pagers, according to the affidavit.

Montes' neighbors said that she was in frequent e-mail contact with them complaining about a special co-op assessment and a mysterious intrusion.

"She was very vocal about [the assessment] and very agitated about it," said Geoff Henry, a co-op board member who said she e-mailed him nearly once a day on various matters. He said Montes worked with other residents to get the assessment rescinded.

In the spring, he said, after finding the door to her apartment unlocked, she sent e-mails to the entire co-op board, asking them if anyone had entered her home without her knowledge.

Henry said that Montes had lived in the building for about 10 years and had served on the board previously. She told other residents that she was going to run for the board again this fall because she was upset about the building's management. More recently, she was working with him to improve delivery of packages to the building, which did not have a doorman. She said she could not receive personal packages at her office.

The Washington Post, September 23, 200 1

Henry said a board member asked her why and Montes replied, in an e-mail that she worked for the Defense Department.

Montes thought that a recent renovation to the 27-unit building "was an extravagance," Henry said. When he countered that the improvements would add value to individual apartments, "She said it didn't matter. She was planning on being here for the long haul. "

LEVEL 1- 40 OF 45 STORIES

Copyright 2001 The Washington Post, The Washington Post

September 28, 2001, Friday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. B03

LENGTH: 852 words

HEADLINE: Attacks Expedited Arrest in Espionage Case; U.S. Feared Passing of Response Plans

BYLINE: Walter Pincus and Bill Miller, Washington Post Staff Writers

BODY:

The FBI accelerated the arrest of a Defense Intelligence Agency analyst on charges of spying for Cuba because of concerns that she would pass along classified information about the U.S. response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, government sources said.

FBI agents arrested Ana Helen Montes, the DIA's senior analyst for matters involving Cuba, at her office last Friday, abruptly ending more than four months of surveillance.

Prosecutors said they have evidence that Montes was working for the Cuban intelligence service and providing classified information. The surveillance, however, had not revealed who her contact was, sources said. The FBI wanted to catch her in the act of meeting someone or picking up money, but it decided to halt the surveillance and arrest her because of the terrorist crisis, the sources said.

The investigation ended because Cuban intelligence could pass along information provided by Montes to other countries, "particularly some in the Middle East," one government official said. Government sources said Cuba has been known to share information with Libya, Iran and others that might be sympathetic to Osama bin Laden, identified by the Bush administration as the architect of the attacks.

The DIA, which produces military intelligence about foreign countries in support of U.S. planning and operations, could not risk keeping Montes on its staff at a time when President Bush had declared war on terrorism, another government source said.

"These are the people who prepare military intelligence," the source said. "It's untenable to have someone you know who is passing on information to a hostile country when you're preparing to go to war... They were forced to close the investigation before they would have liked to."

While under surveillance, Montes continued to have access to classified materials, particularly through Intelink, the computer site maintained for the U.S. intelligence

community. Montes had access to the highest level of classified material on the site, allowing her to see top-secret information and

other sensitive material.

Intelink would not contain any operational plans for a possible response to the terrorist attacks, one Pentagon official said, but it would carry such things as requirements from regional planners and top-secret intelligence reports. Montes "would have access to everything," the official added.

Although authorities had the ability to secretly track Montes's activities on Intelink, cutting her off would have been a problem. Removing her classifications and denying her access to sensitive materials and Intelink would have given away the investigation, government sources said.

The potential for abusing Intelink --a concern among some in the counterintelligence community when the computer site was created in 1994 --was driven home a month ago by the arrest of retired Air Force Master Sgt. Brian P. Regan, who allegedly tried to sell to Libya documents he had downloaded. Creation of the site prevailed in part because of the system's safeguards, including its automatic recording of exactly which government workers view what information.

The FBI had had Montes under surveillance since May, according to an FBI affidavit, when agents obtained information from her laptop computer during a court-approved surreptitious entry into her apartment in Northwest Washington. They retrieved text from her laptop hard drive that appeared to tie her directly to Cuban intelligence, the affidavit said.

Montes was observed making a series of questionable calls from pay telephones, including several the weekend after the terrorist strikes, the FBI said. While more time could have provided investigators with additional leads, sources said surveillance might not have produced a face-to-face meeting between Montes and her contact. Cuban intelligence avoids those kinds of meetings, depending instead on coded telephone messages, computer diskettes and shortwave radio.

Montes, 44, began work at the DIA in 1985 and was assigned to analyze Cuban matters seven years later. The charging documents allege that the spying activities began in 1996. She has been in custody since her arrest on a charge of conspiring to deliver u.s. national defense information to Cuba.

Montes is being represented by the federal public defender service, and lawyers there declined comment on the case yesterday. She is due in u.s. District Court on Thursday.

Court documents filed yesterday show that agents seized a shortwave radio, two computers, a diary, foreign currency, letters and other items from Montes's residence; a Rolodex, notebooks and classified and nonclassified documents from her office; and a list with information about foreign mission license plates from her car.

"Shock" was the reaction of Montes's colleagues at the CIA when they heard of her arrest, according to a Pentagon official familiar with the situation.

"She was the go-to person on Cuba when a briefing was needed," the official said.

Staff writer Sylvia Moreno contributed to this report.



Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Report

The Cuban Threat to U.S. National Security

Nota Bene: The September 22nd arrest of Ana Belen Montes -the Defense Intelligence Agency's senior intelligence analyst for Cuba -raises questions about the assessment of Cuba's military threat to the United States as outlined in the following DIA report. According to the Miami Herald, *"After her trip to Cuba in early 1998, Montes helped the Pentagon settle on a reassessment concluding that Cuba was too weak after the fall of the Soviet Union to present a military threat to the United States. Montes' conclusion in the reassessment was toughened up at the Pentagon. 'The original version was much softer,' said a source on a Capitol Hill intelligence committee. " See Tim Johnson. "Cuba spy suspect was rising into senior intelligence ranks." The Miami Herald. September 27 2001.*

Text of Transmittal Letter (6 May 1998)

The Cuban Threat to U.S. National Security (6 May 1998)

Text of Transmittal Letter

([http://www .defenselink.mil/pubs/thurmltr.htm](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/thurmltr.htm))

The Honorable Strom Thurmond
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-4001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to the requirement set out in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (section 1228), I directed the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to prepare a review and assessment of the Cuban threat to United States national security. In preparing this assessment, DIA coordinated with the National Intelligence Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and the Intelligence and Research Bureau at the State Department. My office coordinated with the Joint Staff, the United States Southern Command, the National Security Council, and the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs at the Department of State.

The assessment looks specifically at Cuban military capabilities and the threat to national security that may be posed by Cuba. In reviewing the assessment addresses unconventional threats, such as the potential for the encouragement of mass riot and attacks on citizens or residents of the United States while engaged in peaceful protests in international waters or airspace. The intelligence community also looked into the potential

for Cuban development of chemical and biological weapons and reviewed possible internal strife in Cuba that could involve citizens or residents of the United States or the armed services of the United States.

While the assessment notes that the direct conventional threat by the Cuban military has decreased, I remain concerned about the use of Cuba as a base for intelligence activities directed against the United States, the potential threat that Cuba may pose to neighboring islands, Castro's continued dictatorship that represses the Cuban people's desire for political and economic freedom, and the potential instability that could accompany the end of his regime depending on the circumstances under which Castro departs. Although the report assesses as unlikely the near-term risk of attacks on United States citizens or residents engaged in peaceful protests in international waters or airspace, Cuban authorities have miscalculated in the past and have not expressed remorse at their killing of four peaceful protesters in February 1996. Finally, I remain concerned about Cuba's potential to develop and produce biological agents, given its biotechnology infrastructure, as well as the environmental health risks posed to the United States by potential accidents at the Juragua nuclear power facility.

The Department of Defense remains vigilant to the concerns posed by Castro's Cuba. I have reviewed our contingency plans and they are appropriate for the level and nature of the Cuban threat to U.S. national security. We will continue to monitor developments in all these areas and will continue to update our intelligence and threat assessments in response to developing situations.

Sincerely

signed

William S. Cohen

cc:

**Honorable Carl Levin
Ranking Democrat**

The Cuban Threat to U.S. National Security

(<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/cubarpt.htm>)

This report has been prepared by the Defense Intelligence Agency in coordination with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the National Security Agency, and the United States Southern Command Joint Intelligence Center pursuant to Section 1228 of Public Law No.105-85, 111 Stat. 1943-44, November 18, 1997

Cuban Armed Forces Significantly Weakened

The disintegration of the Soviet bloc in 1989 triggered a profound deterioration of the Cuban

Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), transforming the institution from one of the most active militaries in the Third World into a stay-at-home force that has minimal conventional fighting ability.

*The end of Soviet economic and military subsidies forced Havana to cut the military's size and budget by about 50 percent after 1989.

*In 1989 Cuba was the largest Latin American military on a per capita basis. Today the FAR is estimated to have about 50,000 to 65,000 regular troops and is comparable on an active duty per capita basis to countries like Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, and El Salvador.

*Severe resource shortages have forced the FAR to reduce training significantly.

*A substantial portion of the FAR's military heavy equipment is in storage. Cannibalization of equipment is used to sustain active duty equipment and make up for shortages of spare parts.

Economic support and sustainment tasks have become as important as protecting the national territory, further weakening the FAR's conventional capabilities.

*The FAR must now grow its own food and raise money to pay for some of its own expenses. Significant numbers of active duty forces are devoted to agricultural, business, and manufacturing activities that help feed the troops and generate revenues.

*The military has also increased the level of economic and social services it provides to the civilian sector. The FAR now supplies more construction, engineering, manufacturing, health, and transportation services than it did in past years.

*These tasks diminish conventional military training efforts and further weaken the FAR's conventional capabilities.

Residual Strengths

The FAR retains some residual combat support strengths that are essentially defensive in nature.

*The military's intelligence and counterintelligence systems directed at the United States appear to have suffered little degradation. Cuba has shared intelligence with other countries including U.S. adversaries.

*Cuba has an agreement with Russia which allows Moscow to maintain a signals intelligence facility at Torrens also known as Lourdes which is the largest such complex outside the Commonwealth of Independent States.

*Cuba's military early warning radar systems are aging but remain generally intact.

*The military leadership is combat-experienced and disciplined.

Army

The ground forces remain primarily armor and artillery units. Their readiness level is low due to severely reduced training.

*The FAR generally is not capable of mounting effective operations above the battalion level.

*Most equipment is in storage and unavailable on short notice

Navy

The Navy has no capability to sustain operations beyond its territorial waters and focuses on defense of the Cuban coast.

*Cuba no longer has any functioning submarines in its inventory.

*Perhaps a little over a dozen of its remaining surface vessels are combat capable.

*The Navy retains a weak anti-surface warfare capability using fast attack boats that carry S- TYX surface-to-surface anti-ship missiles. The Navy also retains an extremely weak antisubmarine warfare capability. The Cuban Navy can pose a more substantial threat to undefended civilian vessels.

Air Force

The Air and Air Defense Forces are now incapable of defending Cuban airspace against large numbers of high-performance military aircraft. Slower or less sophisticated aircraft, however, would be vulnerable to Cuban air and air defense systems.

*The Air Force probably has less than 2 dozen operational MiG fighters.

*Pilot training is judged barely adequate to maintain proficiency.

*Fighter sorties have declined significantly in recent years.

*Cuba would rely on its surface-to-air missiles (SAM) and its air defense artillery to respond to attacking air forces.

Special Operations Forces

Cuba's special operations units are smaller and less proficient than they were a decade ago, but they can still perform selected military and internal security missions.

*The FAR retains a battalion-size airborne unit and other special operations forces.

*Special operations training continues, albeit on a smaller scale than in the past.

Unconventional Forces

Cuba's paramilitary units -the Territorial Militia Troops, the Youth Labor Army devoted to agricultural production, and the naval militia -have suffered considerable degradation of morale and training over the last seven years. However, their core personnel still have the potential to make an enemy invasion costly.

Negligible Conventional Military Threat to the United States

Cuba's weak military poses a negligible conventional threat to the U.S. or surrounding countries.

*The Cubans almost certainly calculate that any attack on U.S. territory or forces would draw a swift, forceful U.S. reaction.

*Cuba could theoretically threaten small, undefended countries in Latin America. However, such action would run counter to its efforts in recent years to improve relations with neighboring countries. There are no current indications that Cuba would undertake any such action.

Biological Warfare Threat

Cuba's current scientific facilities and expertise could support an offensive BW program in at least the research and development stage. Cuba's biotechnology industry is one of the most advanced in emerging countries and would be capable of producing BW agents.

Threat of Mass Migration Currently Low

*The threat of another government-sanctioned mass migration from Cuba is assessed as low as long as domestic political conditions remain stable.

*The 1994 accord indefinitely permits 20,000 Cubans per year to enter the United States, the largest legal annual number since the U.S. airlifts of 1965-1971. The Cuban government uses such a safety valve to help minimize social tension prompted by the poor economy.

*The 1995 accord, which provides for the return of illegal migrants to Cuba, also deters many Cubans from leaving unlawfully. The perception by the Cuban populace that Washington can and will repatriate most illegal migrants has sharply reduced the flow of rafters and will remain a key determinant of migration volume.

*Moreover, mass illegal migration discourages tourism and foreign investor confidence, two factors that Havana--now dependent on dollars from abroad--urgently needs to keep its economy afloat.

Nonetheless, pressures for migrants to flee to the United States despite Cuban and U.S. prohibitions would increase substantially if Cuba's economy--currently growing slowly--resumed a downward spiral, if the government was perceived to relax its position on illegal departures, or in the event of sustained political upheaval.

Potential for Internal Strife

The prospects for widespread civil unrest in Cuba that involves U.S. citizens, residents, or armed forces currently appear to be low.

*There is undoubtedly widespread desire for greater economic and political freedom and weariness with continuing hardship, deprivation and repression. Nonetheless, relatively few Cubans now appear willing to risk the consequences of pressing for sweeping political changes.

Over the longer term, stability is likely to depend on the circumstances under which Castro leaves the scene. Pressures for change are likely to grow that the regime may find difficult to manage.

Threat of Attacks on U.S. Citizens and Residents

Cuban attacks on U.S. citizens or residents while they are engaged in peaceful protest in international

airspace or waters currently appear unlikely.

During exile commemoration ceremonies since Cuba shot down two unarmed U.S. aircraft in international airspace in February 1996, the Cuban government has acted with restraint.

Conclusions

At present, Cuba does not pose a significant military threat to the U.S. or to other countries in the region. Cuba has little motivation to engage in military activity beyond defense of its territory and political system.

Nonetheless, Cuba has a limited capability to engage in some military and intelligence activities which would be detrimental to U.S. interests and which could pose a danger to U.S. citizens under some circumstances.

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