

# Officer charges Cuban activist with bomb plot

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A Miami narcotics detective claimed in court Monday that well-known Latin community activist Raul Villaverde wanted to bomb the detective's house, but was stopped by an admitted drug dealer and ex-spy turned police informant, Ricardo (Monkey) Morales Navarette.

The claim was branded "character assassination" by defense attorneys. Villaverde denied the accusations made by Detective Diosdado Diaz. He laughed at the contention and said, "He is lying like he has been the last three weeks in court."

Diaz, testifying in the now seven-week long effort by defense attorneys for the 41 Tick-Talks defendants to suppress 1,000 hours of wiretap evidence, said Villaverde designed the bombing because Diaz was closing in on the drug-smuggling operation headed by Carlos Quesada. Diaz has claimed that Villaverde, along with his two brothers, was a part of "the Quesada organization."

The detective said he learned of the plot — and the effort to halt it — when Morales turned on his alleged former partners and became the state's primary witness in the massive drug probe.

In a May 4, 1981 raid on the Grove Isle apartment rented by Quesada, Diaz said Quesada (who himself was once a federal witness and admitted narcotics trafficking) turned to him. "He said he should have let Raul Villaverde bomb me," Diaz told Judge Gerald Kogan.

Morales had told him, Diaz testified, that the bombing plot was aborted by Morales and Quesada.

Sitting in the audience, Quesada, free on \$1 million bond in the case, shook his head in disbelief at Diaz's account.

Villaverde agreed: "Do you think I would risk my position in getting rid of a person so insignificant as Diaz? I never knew who the guy was. I didn't even know his name until after the arrests, at the arraignment." That was in August 1981, several months after the period covered by Diaz's claims.

Diaz characterized Villaverde as a CIA-trained expert in demolitions and small arms. He said that Villaverde, known in Miami primarily as an anti-Castro activist, had also spent time in Venezuela "killing terrorists, anti-guerrilla work."

Villaverde, who splits his time between work for an import-export firm in Miami and his sugar farm in the central part of Florida, was indeed trained by the CIA in the early 1960s. His brother, Rafael, who was reportedly lost at sea in March, is perhaps better known than he. A third brother, Jorge, spent nearly 20 years in a Cuban prisons.

All three were arrested in the Tick-Talks case in August 1981. Charges subsequently were dropped against Jorge. The case against Rafael was made moot by his apparent disappearance in a boating accident in the Bahamas. Raul still faces a drug trafficking charge.

"I have never used any of my capabilities in the United States," Villaverde said. "And if I was going to do something like that, do you think I would be stupid enough to tell Carlos Quesada and Ricardo Morales?"

When Diaz made his accusation, it was met with outrage by defense attorneys Douglas Williams and Kirk Munroe. Williams complained about the lack of "any objective cross-check on the accuracy of attributions," in the claim.

"It's an out-and-out character assassination," he said. "It's totally gratuitous."

Diaz claimed that the rationale for the alleged plot was two-fold: that the Villaverde brothers were upset because he had arrested another anti-Castro activist and because they knew the detective was closing in on the organization, about to make arrests.

As with all of the sensational reports that have emerged from Diaz's testimony, at the core is the switch by Ricardo Morales from drug dealer to information dealer. Morales, 42, himself was CIA-trained. He fought as a mercenary soldier in the Congo, aligned himself at various times with the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, CIA, and served as chief of counter-espionage for the Venezuelan secret police.

It is his credibility as an informant that has been called into question during the marathon hearing on the evidence conducted by Judge Kogan. It is critical that the prosecution demonstrate that police had no other means of penetrating the "Quesada organization" other than wiretaps.