

# Tick-Talks witness contradicts self, records show

Morales claims shooting / 3B

By JIM MCGEE  
And JOHN KATZENBACH  
Herald Staff Writers

The state's key witness in a major narcotics case, Operation Tick-Talks, has given two contradictory statements about a 1967 bombing, according to documents examined by The Miami Herald.

The documents show that Ricardo (Monkey) Morales has accused two different top-ranking police officers of helping him in a 1967 bombing.

In January 1981 Morales told Miami police investigators that Metro-Dade Police Capt. Charles Black approved the bombing of the home of Miami Police Officer Gerald Saslaw.

In court Wednesday, it was revealed

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**Capt. Charles Black, Metro-Dade police**

that Morales, in a statement given last month about the same bombing, changed his story and swore that Miami Police Lt. Guillermo Zamora — not Black — gave him Saslaw's address before the bombing.

Morales doesn't link Black in any way to the Saslaw bombing in his most recent statement, The Herald learned.

The contradiction in the two statements raises new questions about the credibility

of Morales, 42, an ex-spy and self-confessed killer, and threatens his role as key witness in the Tick-Talks case.

The 1981 interview also contradicts the statements of Miami Police Detective Diosdado Diaz who testified Wednesday that Morales told him that it was Zamora who provided the Saslaw address.

Diaz, who was present during the 1981 interview, also testified that Morales ac-

cused Zamora in that statement. A copy of the statement examined by The Herald reveals that Morales accused Black, and not Zamora.

Black, who is now head of special enforcement operations, said he only met Morales once. He denied vehemently what he called the "outlandish" allegations.

"The Monkey feels his statements can be proven false and then the defendants in the

case will be freed. He will still have his immunity and then none of the defendants will be mad enough to kill him," Black said.

Zamora also denied Morales' allegations. "It's an absolute lie," he said.

Since 1978 Morales has leveled a series of accusations of corruption and misconduct against many officers in the Miami and Metro-Dade police departments, according to documents.

Not until recent days has any internal investigation of those allegations been undertaken by either department.

Morales' 1981 statement has been withheld from attorneys on both sides of the Tick-Talks case. Dade State Attorney Janet Reno said Tick-Talks prosecutor Rina

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# Statements on bombing conflict

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Cohan has not seen the document. The defense attorneys in the case said the same.

"She [Cohan] has not seen any document," Reno said. "She's heard the general allegations."

Diaz's supervisor, Miami Police Maj. Paul Oboz, acknowledged the discrepancy.

After questioning Diaz Wednesday night, Oboz said: "It is his [Diaz's] understanding that Black told Zamora to provide the information and Zamora got the address and provided it to the Monkey. . . It could be my guys misunderstood what was said."

Defense attorney Douglas Williams asked Diaz on the witness stand Wednesday: "On Jan. 22, 1981 he [Morales] told you he came to be in Lt. Zamora's company before the bombing of the policeman's home?"

"Yes sir," answered Diaz.

That same claim was made under oath by Morales on April 6, 1982, to

Williams, a member of the defense team representing all 41 persons accused of narcotics trafficking in the Tick-Talks case.

In the January 1981 interview, Morales said that Black okayed the bombing and "produced the home address of this officer," according to the four-page investigative report signed by Sgt. Raul Martinez. Morales refused to have that interview tape recorded and declined to take a lie-detector test.

In the statement, Morales says Black attended a meeting with gamblers Frank (Lefty) Rosenthal, John Clarence Cook and an unidentified Mafia member. He never linked Zamora to that meeting and the subsequent bombing.

Diaz has been on the witness stand in Dade Circuit Judge Gerald Kogan's courtroom for the past three weeks. Kogan has been holding a seven-week-long hearing on defense attorneys' requests to suppress 1,000 hours of wiretap evidence.

The Herald also examined a com-

plete transcript of an earlier Miami police interview with Morales, on April 4, 1978, which was sealed last week by Judge Kogan. Only a few edited pages of the 26-page transcript have been turned over to defense attorneys.

In both interviews Morales, who has been repeatedly described as a credible witness by state prosecutors and detectives, leveled serious allegations of crimes or misconduct against detectives with the Miami Police Department and Metro-Dade Police Department.

Internal security records in both departments show no evidence that those allegations were ever the subject of formal investigation.

Morales' charges included:

• That in 1967 he and two partners collected payoffs from numbers-racket operators for Miami Police Vice Squad members. The payments ranged from \$50 to \$100 a week, he said.

• That he was part of a scheme with corrupt Miami police officers to rob numbers-racket operators — stealing their daily profits — and sharing the take with officers.

• That a ranking Metro policeman approved the firebombing of the Miami Police Department's horse stables in 1967. Eleven horses died in the blaze that Morales said was set as a reprisal for a parking ticket given an underworld figure. An arson investigation led to no arrests.

• That several police investigators had socialized with targets of organized-crime investigations and may have provided sensitive information to targets.

Morales has admitted to one murder, two attempted murders and a dozen bombings, including involvement in the October 1976 bombing of a Cubana Airlines jet that killed 73 persons.

The statute of limitations has expired on some of the allegations. Prosecutors have granted him immunity or his testimony against the drug defendants.

## Miami officer suspended during misconduct probe

A Miami police undercover detective who is under investigation for allegations of misconduct has been relieved of duty, a police spokesman said Wednesday.

Raul Puig, 36, was relieved of duty Tuesday pending the outcome of the investigation, Miami police spokesman Sgt. Jack Sullivan.

Police would not discuss the allegations against Puig, who lodged the allegations or who is investigating the allegations.

Assigned to the Strategic Investigation Unit, Puig recently testified in the Operation Tick-Talk drug-trafficking investigation. He joined the Miami Police Department in 1973.