CIRCUIT COURT - 11th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT DADE COUNTY "CRIMINAL DIVISION" THE STATE OF FLORIDA VS. NO. 73-2592 -CF03	Evidence W/M 11-8-43 100 NDW 112 TORR, J. MJOSEP
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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 11TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA CRIMINAL DIVISION CASE NO. 76-8145 (Durant) STATE OF FLORIDA,)) Plaintiff,)) vs. 3 VALENTIN HERNANDEZ,) Defendant.) Miami, Florida October 6, 1977 3:45 o'clock P.M. **APPEARANCES:** RICHARD E. GERSTEIN, ESQ., State Attorney, by ROBERT KAYE, ESQ., Assistant State Attorney, appearing on behalf of the Plaintiff. NATHANIEL L. BARONE, JR., ESQ., and CARLING H. STEDMAN, ESQ., appearing on behalf of Defendant. ------DEPOSITION OF ABILIO CORREA MATZ. TRAKTMAN & ASSOCIATES

MOVANT'S EXHIBIT #5

Deposition of ABILIO CORREA, taken by the Defendant for the purpose of discovery and for use as evidence in the above-styled cause, wherein State of Florida is the Plaintiff and Valentin Hernandez is the Defendant, pending in the Circuit Court of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit in and for Dade County, Florida, Criminal Division, pursuant to notice heretofore filed, before LONNIE C. MORRIS, a Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at Large, at the Dade County Law Library, Room 810, Metropolitan Justice Building, 1351 Northwest 12th Street, Miami, Florida, on the 6th day of October 1977, commencing at 3:45 o'clock P.M.

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Thereupon--

JORGE GUTIERREZ,

was duly sworn to truthfully and faithfully perform the duties of Interpreter, translating from English to Spanish and Spanish to English.

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Thereupon--

ABILIO CORREA,

a witness named in the notice heretofore filed,

called by the Defendant, was first duly sworn in the above cause and testified, through the Interpreter, as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. BARONE:

Q Mr. Correa, please state your name for the record.

A Abilio Corraa.
Q Your first name is Abilio?
A Yes, sir.
Q Can I call you Abilio?
A Yes.

Q I represent Valentin Hernandez. I am going to ask you some questions.

If you don't understand the question, don't hesitate to say so. If the question calls for a yes or no answer and you want to make an explanetion, you can.

If you want me to repeat any question, I will be happy to do so. I am not here to trick you or confuse you.

You have stated your name; what is

your residence address?

A 2970 Northwest 101st Street.

Q What is your trade or your occupation or your calling?

A Taxi driver.

Q Did you know Luciano Nieves?

A Yes.

Q What was your relationship with Mr. Nieves?

A He was a friend of mine since Cuba.

Q How long would you say that you had known the gentleman?

A I have known the gentleman since 1958 and with him at certain locations I have had friendly conversation with him.

Q Do you know Valentin Hernandez?

A I met him here in Court.

 Ω . How long ago was that?

A Well, I do not recall correctly the time, but it was the day that they had the Court sassion in this case.

Q What were you doing here in Court? A Nieves was a friend of mine and he had told me to come over, because he had had a

problem with Valentin, and he wanted me to come with him to Court.

Q Was there any particular reason why he wanted you to come to Court?

A In other words, no particular reason, just like any other friend calling on you, a friend to go with him some place.

Q How many other people did you bring with you to Court that day, with Mr. Nieves?

A There were about seven or eight friends of Nieves.

Q Did you come to Court together or did you meet at the Court?

A It seems like I came with him. I don't recall correctly, because I think I men him over at the Replica office, Replica being a newspaper. I think I came with him. I think I even brought him here that day in my taxi.

I am not very sure about that, but I am almost sure that it was that day, even though I am not certain.

Q When I ask you a question, will you give me the answer. If you just give it like you are

Now the Replica newspaper, is that the one that Mr. Max Lesnick is the publisher of?

A Correct.

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Q Are you a friend of Mr. Lesnick?

A I was a friend of his, but I am a little mad at him now.

Q There were a group of men that came to the Court with you and with Mr. Nieves and were these people assembled by Mr. Lesnick?

A No, it was not assembled by Mr. Lesnick. The only person I was with was Mr. Nieves.

Q Before coming to Court, did Mr. Nieves meet at the Replica newspaper with you people?

A I am refreshing my memory, my mind right now. I saw Mr. Nieves there, as I said before, and he told me to come with him to Court to keep him company. Then he asked a few other people that were there to come with him to Court and they did not want to come.

Then I went with Nieves to pick up another gentleman but now I cannot recall his name.

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I don't know if we picked up anybody else but I remember maybe later on in the process of this conversation with you, I might remember.

Q Do you know what relationship Mr. Nievas had with Mr. Lesnick back there at this time that we are talking about?

A Yes, they were friends.

Q Was it Mr. Lesnick who had put certain articles in the newspaper about Mr. Nieves?

A Yes, like any other newspaper and radio station in the area.

Q I assume that you are familiar with Mr. Nieves' co-existence policy with Castro?

A Please, how do you say it?

Would you repeat the question again.

Q Mr. Nieves had certain political views concerning the Castro regime in Cuba, did he not?

A Let me see how I interpret that question. He was then with the thing off. His face was to have a political opening with Castro by Cubans. He wanted to let the Cubans handle it and not the Americans. That was what I heard him say. They

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wanted to discuss the political thing between the Cubans directly with Castro and not through the American government.

Q After your appearance here at Court that day, did you continue to be friends with Mr. Nieves?

A Yes.

Q Before that date, did you know Valentin Hernandez?

A Only by the newspapers, for the attack that he had done to Mr. Nieves.

Q That would be after, but not before you went to Court?

A The attack was before coming to Court.

Q After that time in Court, your statement then is that you never saw Mr. Hernandez?

A No, sir.

Q Are you familiar with a group of political activists known as the Pragmatistas?

A Well, that is what Nieves used to say in one of the occasions that I talked with him. He said that Mr. Hernandez was a member of the Pragmatistas, that Mr. Hernandez was a member of the group

that went to Cuba, that they say that had shot in Cuba a Mr. Rivero Collado.

Let me explain the case to you. This Mr. Rivero Collado was a gentleman that went to Cuba and they said that he was in favor of Castro and now they say that Castro shot him in a firing squad. He said that Mr. Nieves used to say that Valentin Hernandez was a member of the same group and was directed by Mr. Collado.

Q Do you belong to any Cuban political groups or parties?

A I used to be a member of one a while ago, but I am retired from all of that now.

Q What was the name of the group, please?

A Second Front and Alpha 66.

Q Were you in any way connected with the Bay of Pigs invasion or brigade?

A No. I was in Cuba when that happened.

Q Did you come to the United States as a political refugee?

A I went out of Cuba to Venezuela as a political refugee by the Embassey of Venezuela, but

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I came to this country with immigration visa.

Q When you ware in Cuba, what type of work did you do there?

A I used to sell.

Q What did you sell?

A It is what they used to call in Cuba the little cheap things and ten cent things.

Q Is that what we call novelties?

A I don't know exactly how you call it here. It is like things that you can buy over at Woolworth's in the five and ten cent store.

 Ω How far in school did you go, sir?

A Six years.

Q How old are you?

A Forty-one years.

Q Did you serve in the army in Cuba?

A . In Cuba, I was in the mountains fighting in the mountains and I served in the army here in this country.

Q When you say you were fighting in the mountains in Cuba, was this some type of revolutionary group?

A Yes, of the group called the 13th of

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March and the Victories of the STudents.

Q When you were in Court with Mr. Nieves, did you stay in the Courtroom during the hearing or the trial?

A I think there was no trial or no hearing at that time, but I cannot recall exactly. I think that Mr. Valentin Hernandez had left.

I do not remember correctly.

Q Did you see Mr. Hernandez on the date you were in Court?

A I saw him on the outside of the Courtroom. That's where it happened, the accident that he had with Nieves.

Q How many people were outside the Courtroom that time with your group?

A Seven or eight, as I previously stated.

Q Was there any particular reason why that group was standing outside of the Courtroom waiting?

A Because they had not started the Court session or something like that.

Q Are you sure the Court session was not

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over with?

A I don't recall exactly, but I do not baliave so. I think it had not started yet because Mr. Valentin Hernandez was outside. 12

Q Do you see anybody in this room that was there on that day besides Mr. Hernandez?

A I don't remember exactly, but I suppose you were there, because you were his lawyer but I do not recall exactly.

Q Did you see Mr. Hernandez leave the Courtroom with several other people?

A No.

Q What did you hear Mr. Hernandez say, if anything, outside the Courtroom?

A I will will you this. I am going to say averything that I can because it has been a few years and I will say everything that I remember and that's all. Maybe a few things will come back to me, will come to my memory, but I have been trying to remember everything in the last few days and you can be assured that all I am going to say is the truth and I am going to say what I remember, that I heard.

Q Go ahead, please.

A I remember Valentin Hernandez, and I was sitting on the bench on the outside in the hallway and Mr. Nieves was in front of me with a group of four or five, talking and Valentin was walking up and down the hallway and at one of those moments that he passed by the group, Mr. Nieves called him and then I stood up because I wanted to see what was happening. I went to see what was happening.

Mr. Nieves told him that he wanted to know something or something like that, why Valentin had attacked him if he did not know him or if he was his enemy. The only thing that he was doing was exposing his ideas without hiding and he wanted to know why he had attacked him cowardly.

Valentin then said because, "You are a son of a bitch," then they had a few words that I do not recall correctly, because from that moment I tried to tell Nieves to calm down.

Another thing that I remember that they said was that Valentin said, you are a son of a bitch and then Mr. Nieves said about the same thing

to him.

Then Nieves says, "Well, now you are going to jail," and Valentin said, "I am a man and I don't care what happens and if you don't step out from what you are in, you are going to regret it because I am a man and I am going to take this to the last consequences."

That is more or loss what was said but he said something else but that is more or less what I remember exactly.

Q Mr. Nieves was very upset was he not when this conversation or statement took place on his behalf?

A No, he was not really mad because he was a man and he always talked like that, and he was altered and disgusted.

Q Was he not excited, in fact, pointing his finger and talking in a loud voice when he was talking at that moment?

A Nieves?

Q Yes.

A I don't remember exactly about that part, but I do remember what happened between two

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people when they get in a fight, they are somewhat disgusted.

Q When you say a fight, in other words, was it like an argument; is that right?

A Yes, what I say is a fight was an argument.

Q How close was Mr. Nieves to Mr. Hernandez during the time this conversation was taking place?

A Hernandez was about like in the corner of the room and the group of four or five people were about here.

MR. KAYE: Indicating a distance of about 15 or 20 feet.

Q (By Mr. Barone) About 15 or 20 feet?

A More or less, that's what I think.

Q Wasn't it a fact that Mr. Hernandez had five or six people around him at the time this incident took place?

Isn't it a fact that Mr. Hernandez had a group of at least five or six people around him?

I do not recall that.

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Q Do you have any recollection of me having Mr. Hernandez by the arm, like this (indicating), and we were walking away from Mr. Nieves?

A No, I do not remember that.

Q Well, after this argument took place between Mr. Nieves and Mr. Hernander, did Mr. Nieves go back into the Courtroom for the trial or did he go home?

A What I am going to answer to you is only what it seems to me but I am not very sure.

It seems like if he had gone into the Courtroom and Hernandez was called and Hernandez did not appear.

It seems to me that was what happened, but I am not sure. At least I am not sure or I don't remember exactly.

Q The incident that you are relating about, this took place when Mr. Hernandez was on trial for aggravated assault; is that correct?

A Yes, I believe that was the case of the assault of Nieves.

Q Do you remember the name of the Judge on that day?

A No.

Q If I mention the name of Judge Williams, would that refresh your memory?

A I would like to say that would not.

Q Actually, how long ware you with Mr. Nieves that day?

A That day I believe that after we finished that, we went ahead with him and two or three other people and then we went to where Mr. Luis Torne had an office there on Flagler, right beside the little cafe.

Then we drank coffee there and from there on I left that group over there and I went to work.

Q When you stated that you believe that Mr. Hernandez did not return back to the Court there, that happened that same day; is that correct?

A I don't remember exactly, but there is one thing that I associate with that, because I do remember there was a date in Court that he did not show up. It seems to me that it was that same day.

Q How many different times did you go to

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Court with Mr. Nieves?

A Only one time.

Q What time did you go to Court that day; was it in the morning or in the afternoon, to the best of your recollection? 18

A I believe it was in the afternoon. I believe it was about two or three o'clock. I do not remember exactly, and I am telling you only from what I think it was.

I do not remember exactly, but it seemed to me that it was about then. You know, this has been many years since then. You can imagine.

Q Do you know if anyone else in the hall had any conversation or arguments with Mr. Nieves on that day?

A That I know of, no, but, talking yes, there was a lot of people talking to him but I do not recall that he had any other problems with anyone else there.

Q How do you know the man who had the argument with Mr. Nieves was Valentin Hernandez? A Because I had been told that he was Valentin Hernandez, and they had showed him to me.

19 Ċ. When you say that you had been told 0 that he was Valentin Hernandez, who told you? Mr. Nieves. A Can you give me a description of the Q clothing that this man had on, who was identified to you as Hernandez and what he was wearing on that day? A No, sir. Can you give me a physical description Ő. of the man pointed out to you as Valentin Hernandsz? I remember he was a little shorter A than I was, and the color of his hair was like mine. Q Would you say that he was dark complected? Yes, I would say he was a little A dark. Q . What else can you remember about the man? A. He seemed a little bit smaller than me, but a vary strong man. Q Do you remember the color of his hair? р, No, sir. Ω Did he have a moustache?

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A I am going to tell you something outside of this, so you can have an idea.

I am a taxi driver. Sometimes I pick up a customer and he tells me, "Wait here," and if the customer don't come back then I have to state that I don't get paid because I would not even recognize that customer if I saw him again.

I am not an expert on identification. Q Do you think that you could identify Mr. Hernandez if you saw him today?

A I am almost sure.

Q Have you seen any photographs of him in the newspaper?

A I saw him after the newspaper said that he was the man that had killed Mr. Nieves, but it did not even look like him.

Q. Did you cut out or save any of those newspaper clippings?

A NO, I just looked at it, because I did not even recognize him. It did not even look like him.

Q Has any police officer or any police agency shown you any photographs of Mr. Hernandez?

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A No, sir.

This is the first time I ever talked about this case with anyone.

Q How did the State Attorney's Office gat your name as a witness?

A Because of the moment of the discussion between Hernandez and Nieves, I believe there was a State Attorney there and somebody had called him or he was just there and he took a statement from not only me but a few others that were there.

Q Did these statements take place in the State Attorney's Office?

A They were taken in the hallway and I don't know if it was a State Attorney, but I was told that it was a State Attorney.

Q When you say the statement was taken in the hallway, was a Court reporter, such as this man, there?

A No, sir. I do not recall that very clearly, but I believe that they just took the names and they took it in longhand.

Q Did you sign anything?A I do not remember.

Υ. 22 Do you know if you were put under Q oath when you made that statement? I don't recall exactly but I believe Α they asked me some questions and I believe they requested us to sign but I do not remember if we signed or not. When you came to Court with Mr. Nieves, 0 was that back on December 7, 1973? I do not remember. A Do you know anybody by the name of Q Sigifrido Gonzales? A No. I do not remember right now. Maybe I would know him if I saw him, but not the name. What about Armando Santos? Q A Neither. Do you know William, Willie Salon? Q $\mathbf{P}_{\mathbf{a}}$ No. A man who has one arm? Q That has one arm? What is the name A of that person? William Salon? S-a-l-o-n. \mathcal{O} That name is not familiar. No. A

Q On the date that you saw Mr. Hernandez, did you see him with his arm off to here?

A No, I do not remember that. I saw Hernandez alone and did not see anybody else with him.

Q Are you positive that Mr. Hernandes was along when this conversation took place?

A Yes, because he was walking alone in the hallway. Maybe there was somebody else with him, but they might have been sitting the same as I was with Nieves, but I was away from this group.

Q Do you know a gentleman by the name of Mike Lemun or Lemus?

A No.

Q Do you know the man who was supposed to have been present with Mr. Nieves when the assault allegedly was made on him by Mr. Hernandez?

A I was told who it was, but at this moment I don't even remember the name.

Q Do you know if he was there that day when you were also at Court?

A I do not remember. I was a friend mostly of Mr. Nieves, and the other people that were

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there some I knew but only by sight.

Q Can you give me the names of some of the people that you knew there? 24

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A There were other people that were there that day but I do not remember by name that I remember that I know there was one called Galesos Diaz or something like that.

I am not sure of the pronunciation and there was another one whose name I cannot recall and the name I know it, but I cannot recall it right now. I have seen him many, many times and I have talked to him many, many times but I do not remember what his last name is.

Q What about Limos, L-i-m-o-s?

A I believe that was the one that we went to pick up to his house with Mr. Nieves but I do not recall exactly the name of the individual.

MR. KAYE: Please tell the witness just to answer the question and not volunteer.

Q (By Mr. Barone) This Mr. Limos or Mr. Lemus, his name is spelled L-e-m-u-s.

A That name does not ring a bell to me, but I don't associate that name with anybody that I

knew.

DIRECT EXAMINATION (Continued) BY MR. STEDMAN:

Q Have you ever been in the employ or received any monies from Mr. Lesnick, the publisher of Replica or his firm or any of his employees?

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A No, never.

Q Have any of the people that you have told us about here today and identified by whatever identification or by name or whatever, have you ever received any money for compansation from Mr. Lesnick the publisher of Replica or his corporation?

A I do not understand that question. I have no idea. I do not know about it because I am not on any type of relationship with him.

Q Have any of these people or the publisher himself ever told you that he has paid any of them?

A That I do not know. I was a friend of Lesnick, but I never talked to him about his business or his problems.

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He is an intellectual. How would you characterize your

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relationship with Mr. Lesnick?

A Well, Lesnick was a revolutionary, the same as I, and when I got here to the United States in exile, I was in the Second Front and Lesnick used to visit the office and then I made trips with him there.

That was my relationship with him and after that I have had a problem with him and now I have no relationship with Mr. Lesnick.

Q What was that problem?

A In the year 1960-something, I had a problem with the people of Serralta Noguer.

Q What was that problem?

A Well, I went in a group to see Mr. Serralta when we were making a donation to a revolutionary activity and there was a fight with Mr. Serralta and I was taken into custody and arrested in a fight.

The rest of the people left and then Serralta said that Mr. Lesnick was there in the group which was a lie.

That's when my relationship with Mr. Lesnick started, and I made a little more trips with

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Mr. Lesnick because Serralta was accusing me of it and I was involved in it.

That was just about the trip that I had with Mr. Lesnick, but you know, Mr. Lesnick is an intellectual and I am nothing but a -- .

Q How would you describe your relationship with him in your own words briefly?

A At this moment, I have no relationship.

Q Has he ever provided any legal defense or funds or lawyers for you?

No, sir.

A

Q Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

A Do I have to answer that?

MR. KAYE: Yes, he asked you if you have ever been convicted of a crime and that involves a felony or a misdemeanor. He has the right to ask you the question and to get that information, because it is a matter of record, and you might as well tell us now.

THE WITNESS: I was convicted once and I do not remember exactly but I served 30 days

for something like, I was sentenced to 90, and I served 30 because it was the first time that I have ever had a problem.

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MR. KAYE: What was the problem? THE WITNESS: Since you are proposing justice, I do not want to be unfair to anyone, but it was an injustice for me at that time.

Q (By Mr. Stedman) What was the charge?

A We were charged with robbery or something like that, and it was a felony of some kind because they found me and another friend of mine with some pistols that we had in a car. They were not stolen or anything like that.

Q Was that here in Dade County?

A In Miami, and this was by the City of Miami Police Department.

Q Were you down in City Court or was it County Court or State Court?

A City.

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Q When was that?

It was in the year 1965 or 1966.

Who were the co-defendants in that

case then?

A Me and Carlos Herrera, a friend of mine and another kid that I don't remember his name because he only had a nickname.

(A.).

Q Do you know if Mr. Nieves had ever been convicted of a crime prior to his death?

A No, I do not know about that.
 Q Did you ever talk with him about it?
 A No, I believe he told me once that
 he had been convicted in Cuba.

Q Of what?

A For being a counter-revolutionary against Castro or something.

Q Nieves had been convicted of being a counter-revolutionary?

A That is what he told me once. I don't know if it was true or not.

Q What else did he tell you about that, if anything?

A That was all, that he had been serving in the Isle of Pines Prison for one year.

Q Didn't you find that difficult to reconcile with his recent political views?

MR. KAYE: I am going to object at this point. You are going far afield and this has nothing to do with the case at hand. 30 -

A N A.

MR. STEDMAN: You are right. I will not go any further.

Q (By Mr. Stadman) Has Mr. Lesnick, the publisher of Replica, ever been convicted of apything to your knowledge?

A He was involved in something against Serralta Noguer at that time and I believe that he was found not guilty.

Q Where was that case tried, if you recall?

A That case was taken to Court about three times and it went to the smaller Court, a preliminary Court.

Then it went to the City Court and then the last time was in the County Court.

Q Was anyone convicted in that matter that you recall?

A No.

MR. STEDMAN: I have no further .

questions.

MR. KAYE: No questions. We will waive. 37

(Thersupon, the deposition was concluded at 4:45 P.M.) (Reading, signing and notice of filing waived.)

CERTIFICATE

STATE OF FLORIDA) SS COUNTY OF DADE)

I, LONNIE C. MORRIS, a Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby certify that I reported the deposition of ABILIO CORREA, a witness called by the Defendant in the above-styled cause; that the said witness was duly sworn by me; and that the foregoing pages, numbered from 1 to 31, inclusive, constitute a true record of the deposition by said witness.

I further certify that I am not an attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor financially interested in the action.

WITNESS my hand and seal at Miami, Dade County, Florida, this 12th day of October 1977.

Notary Public, State of Piorída at Large

My Commission expires: 7/5/81

MATZ, TRAKTMAN & ASSOCIATES CERTIFIED SHORTRAND REPORTERS 316 BISCAYNE BUILDING MIAMI, FLORIDA