

2nd round of rights hearings almost ends in boxing match

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The second round between magazine publisher Antonio de la Cova and the Civil Rights Commission was fought Friday, with chairman Enrique González and the witness verbally punching each other for most of the three-hour hearing.

At the outset of the hearing, the confrontation almost turned physical when de la Cova tried to read a prepared statement critical of committee members that he had earlier presented to them in executive session.

González told him "defamatory" material could only be submitted in an executive session, and when de la Cova persisted in trying to read the document González rose to his feet, angrily announced his intention to settle the matter "man-to-man." Quick intervention by others kept the two men apart.

Much of Friday's questioning dealt with lists of the names and addresses of alleged Castro sympathizers published by de la Cova's magazine, Crónica Gráfica, and names de la Cova allegedly supplied Police Intelligence Division agent Eugenio Serrano.

The questioning tried to determine

whether de la Cova wrote articles in Crónica under the pseudonym of Armando André, in violation of a parole board ban on his engaging in political writing. De la Cova served 6½ years in prison for his part in a conspiracy to bomb a Miami bookstore he claimed was operated by Castro agents.

González charged repeatedly that the articles signed by André were very similar in style to articles written by de la Cova. De la Cova said Armando André was a pseudonym used by his wife, Gloria Gil, an editor at Crónica Gráfica.

De la Cova, at the close of Friday's hearing, complained that the Civil Rights Commission seeks to have him returned to prison for parole violation. The commission said that Isidoro Mojica, chief federal probation officer in Puerto Rico, had sent it a written inquiry about the witness but that the letter has not been answered to date. De la Cova, under questioning, said he had no evidence that the Commission seeks to have him jailed.

González said the commission will next call several historians to testify on the background of intelligence gathering by law enforcement agencies here, as part of its investigation of the so-called subversive lists.