

Rights unit seeks order on de la Cova

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8-8-87-2

The Civil Rights Commission will seek a court order to force former La Cronica magazine publisher Antonio de la Cova to testify, after he apparently duped a doctor into excusing his absence Friday.

De la Cova's attorney sent the commission a doctor's certificate saying he was ailing with asthma. The lawyer said de la Cova would need nearly three weeks to recuperate and prepare for the hearing.

However, Dr. Miguel Santos Buch, told the commission Friday that de la Cova "had asthma symptoms, but he played me for a fool."

Santos Buch told the commission he first met de la Cova Thursday, when he visited his office complaining of asthma. He said de la Cova told him he was not feeling well and wanted a note to that effect. Santos Buch said he thought de la Cova worked for a print shop and wanted a medical certificate for absence.

Commission Chairman Enrique Gonzalez said he would seek a court order forcing de la Cova to testify.

At an earlier hearing, former Police Intelligence Division Cmdr. Ismael Meléndez testified that during the administration of Gov. Carlos Romero Barceló, de la Cova had the run of the division.

In its current issue, La Cronica published the list of names circulated anonymously to the media purporting to be a police "subversive" list. The issue also contains previously unpublished material about the Aug. 24, 1978, murder of police officer Ruben Rodríguez Rivera in Naguabo, the first known criminal act carried out by the Macheteros terrorist group.

De la Cova was arrested May 5, 1976, on charges involving the dynamiting of a business in Miami's Little Havana and other terrorist acts. He was sentenced to 60 years in prison. When he was paroled after about six years, he was forbidden from engaging in political activities.



Dr. Miguel Santos Buch testifies Friday at Civil Rights Commission hearings on the so-called "subversives" lists. STAR photo by José García

When a judge ruled that publication of the magazine was a political activity, de la Cova's wife, Gloria Gil, took over as publisher.

Also appearing before the commission Friday were Jaco Weiselman and Margaret Levy, attorneys for two of the alleged Machetero members charged with the Sept. 12, 1983, robbery of \$7 million from a Wells Fargo depot in West Hartford.

They said they never had any involvement with Puerto Rico or its politics until they began representing the accused, but that their names and those of the other attorneys in the case appear on the list published in La Cronica.

Weiselman said appearing on such a list could affect his practice since 60 per cent of his business involves representing private corporations.