

Sun On Saturday

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1998.

THE NATION CARES



7 Exiles Charged With Plotting to Kill Castro

From Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—The U.S. government on Tuesday announced the indictment of seven Cuban exiles, including a director of Miami's influential Cuban American National Foundation, on charges of plotting to assassinate Fidel Castro.

Although there have been numerous plots and claims of plots to kill Cuba's communist leader since he seized power in 1959, the indictment was believed to be the first such accusation in a court of law.

It alleged the defendants planned for four years to kill Castro, 72, outside the United States, in particular during his trip to a Latin American summit on Margarita island off the Venezuelan coast in November 1997.

If convicted, they face up to life in prison.

The indictment suggests that more people could be charged, saying the plotters conspired "with other persons known and unknown to the grand jury."

At least one defendant, Jose Antonio Llana, 67, is a director of the Cuban American National Foundation, which Castro has accused for years of plotting to kill him. The foundation publicly advocates political pressure to spur change in Cuba.

In Miami, the foundation called the allegations "politically motivated" and expressed confidence that Llana was innocent.

Thousands to walk for freedom today

THOUSANDS OF BARBADIANS are expected to walk for their freedom today to celebrate **Emancipation Day**.

The walkers are expected to assemble by 5:30 a.m. at the four points - Norman A. Niles Roundabout, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Barbados Community College and Mapp Hill, all in St. Michael.

They would then proceed to the **Emancipation Statue**.

Walkers have been asked to wear red, green or black and bring a flower.

At the **Emancipation Statue**, addresses will be made by Prime Minister Owen Arthur, Cuba's President Fidel Castro, Leader of the Opposition David Thompson, leader of the National Democratic Party Dr. Richie Haynes, president of the Clement Payne Movement David Comissiong, and chairperson of the National Youth Commission of South Africa Ms. Hlengiwe Bhegu.

Rev. Eliseus Joseph will offer prayers and Minister of Culture, Mia Mottley, will chair the event.

Day to honour air crash victims

CUBAN PRESIDENT Fidel Castro will dedicate a monument to the victims of a Cubana Airlines bombing this evening.

That ceremony at Paynes Bay, St. James, will also hear addresses by diplomatic representatives of Guyana and North Korea which also lost nationals in the bloody event.

The monuments will bear the names of the 73 victims — 57 Cubans, 11 Guyanese and five North Koreans — who died when two bombs, placed aboard the jet by members of anti-Castro groups, exploded shortly after the plane took off from the then Seawell Airport in October 1976.

This morning he is scheduled to participate in the **Walk For Freedom** which culminates at the

Emancipation Statue

(Bussa Roundabout).

He is also scheduled to have lunch at

Ilaro Court

and attend a reception in his

honour hosted by Governor-General and Lady Husbands at **Government House**.

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Caribbean trade pact signed at summit

The Honohin Advertiser

Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic — Caribbean nations signed a trade pact doubling their market yesterday at a summit marked by the overnight conversion of Fidel Castro from regional bogeyman to elder statesman.

The 16-nation summit also illustrated growing antipathy toward the United States, increasingly seen as neglecting the region on trade and aid issues since the end of the Cold War.

The free-trade accord will eventually remove most tariffs between the Caribbean Community — whose 15 nations have a population of 6 million — and the Dominican Republic, with 8 million people.

It was timed to coincide with negotiations for a free trade zone encompassing the entire Western Hemisphere by 2005.

The formerly insular Dominican Republic is trying to become a linchpin of the Americas through its Hispanic culture, Caribbean location and ties to the United States, where more than a million Dominicans live. The ambitious Dominican president, Leonel Fernandez, has seized a leading role in the unprecedented Caribbean embrace of Cuban leader Castro — a once avowed enemy of Fernandez's more conservative predecessors.

"We believe that the development of our region must include Cuba," said St. Lucia Prime Minister Kenny Anthony, who signed the trade pact with Fernandez on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

Castro, largely isolated from his neighbors since seizing power in 1959, ended a triumphant tour three weeks ago that took him to Jamaica, Barbados and Grenada.

His newfound acceptance results in part from Caribbean frustration with a U.S. policy perceived as lacking leadership, vision and generosity — reflected in a 25 percent drop in U.S. aid over five years, to \$137 million last year.

Cuba, meanwhile, has increased its donations to an estimated \$20 million and handed out hundreds of scholarships at Cuban universities.

A declaration from the leaders yesterday expressed "deep disappointment" that the United States failed to make good on President Clinton's promises to extend the same preferences for Caribbean textiles as those enjoyed by Mexico under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The statement — a clear challenge to the U.S. embargo of Cuba — extended a warm hand of friendship to Cuba and underscored "the significance of (Castro's) participation at the summit." It was read as Castro smiled from the head table.

Castro argued that the small island nations of the Caribbean must oppose the unbridled capitalism he attributes to the United States.

"The Caribbean confronts the serious danger of a growing marginalization," he said Friday, calling on regional leaders to promote tourism to boost their economies. "Unity is the sole and true strength of the Caribbean."