

RB-204

The military honor court which has been hearing the case of General Arnaldo Ochoa who has been accused of corruption and cooperating with drug traffickers has reached a decision. Here is the story*

The military honor court made up of 45 generals and 2 admirals says that General Ochoa should be tried for high treason.

It asked that the full weight of the law fall upon the much decorated General who led Cuban troops in Ethiopia, commanded Cuban military advisors in Nicaragua and served in Angola.

This means that he will now be tried and will face the death penalty.

During its final session which lasted for more than twelve hours, the honor court heard the testimony of other high army officers who had worked under the command of General Ochoa.

One after another they gave details on how the General tried to make money while he was stationed in Angola - by selling sugar and meat on the black market, by buying and selling diamonds and ivory and by selling electronic products such as television sets and recorders.

But the main charge against him was that of cooperating with drug traffickers.

One of the witnesses, Captain Martinez, told how he was sent by General Ochoa to Colombia to meet with the king of the Medellin drug cartel, Pablo Escobar.

It was there, Martinez said, that they worked out plans for cooperation in laundering drug money and using Cuba as an intermediate point for shipping cocaine into the United States.

Martinez said that Escobar asked him for shoulder ~~held~~ ground to air missiles but that Ochoa never sent him any.

The honor court also recommended that General Ochoa be stripped of all his honors and medals, that he be expelled of the army and that he be removed from the Central Committee of the Communist party,

For CBC News this is Lionel Martin in Havana

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