











# Lindh Pleads Innocent to 10-Count Indictment

John Walker Lindh pleaded innocent Wednesday to a 10-count federal indictment that charged him with conspiring to kill Americans and aiding Osama bin Laden's terrorist network. The widow of a CIA officer killed shortly after questioning Lindh called him a traitor.



John Walker Lindh

"Not guilty, sir," Lindh answered, after U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III asked, "How do you plead to all the charges?"

It was Lindh's third appearance at the federal courthouse since he was brought back to the United States by military aircraft on Jan. 24. His parents, Frank Lindh and Marilyn Walker, were there for the arraignment, as they had been for his previous court appearances. Also present were Johnny and Gail Spann, the parents of CIA officer Johnny "Mike" Spann, killed in a prison uprising in Mazar e-Sharif in November, and his widow, Shannon Spann.

Lindh no longer has the shaved head that he had in his initial appearances and his black hair, still closely cropped, was starting to grow back. He was clean-shaven, a sharp contrast from the long beard and long hair seen in televised images of him from Afghanistan.

Lindh answered, "Yes" and "Yes" and "Correct, sir," when the judge asked whether he had seen the indictment and had reviewed it with his attorneys.

If convicted on the charges, the 21-year-old Lindh could face life imprisonment. Shannon Spann, talking to reporters outside the courthouse, said she thinks he should get the death penalty.

"We expect Mr. Walker to be personally held responsible for all the things he's done," she said. "My view today is certainly that he should have been charged with treason," Shannon Spann said, "but I haven't had a chance to speak

with the prosecutors yet and to understand the evidentiary decision-making that went into that decision."

"John Walker was a traitor because of the way he lived," Gail Spann said.

After the hearing, Lindh's father attempted to speak to Johnny Spann, but several officials from the U.S. attorney's office intervened and prevented the conversation, according to Sam Dibley, a spokeswoman for U.S. attorney's office, who was there. Dibley said the officials told everyone in the area "we were trying to get the family out without anyone speaking to them."

Johnny Spann said before the hearing, on ABC's "Good Morning America," that he feels Lindh was an accomplice in his son's death because he was present during the uprising that resulted in the killing of the CIA officer.

"If you and I went out to rob a store and I shot someone in the process of that, it is my understanding you would be an accomplice and you would feel the same price I pay," Spann said.

Ellis did not set a trial date, but said that as a target, he would like jury selection to begin in late August. He scheduled a hearing for Friday to set a trial date and go over a pretrial schedule, which would likely include hearings on handling classified information in

the case. The government and defense counsel had suggested in motions Tuesday that the trial not begin before mid-November, but Ellis said that was too long to wait.

"November is too far," Ellis said, adding that he was thinking of a trial in September.

Outside the courthouse, Spann's parents said they were there to see justice done.

"Tell them, Americans will not tolerate traitors," Spann told reporters on the courthouse steps.

"We sent our son ... to a faraway land to fight against evil so we could continue to live and enjoy the freedom that we live in today," he said. "But as we all know, freedom is not free. Bodies have come home draped in flags, and Mike's was the first."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Bellows said he expected the government's case to take two weeks.

In asking for a November trial, the defense had said it would need time to conduct overseas investigations, handle classified information, argue for suppression of evidence and allow the effects of prejudicial publicity to fade.

Federal prosecutors said they disagreed with a delay due to publicity, but accepted the other reasons for a November date.

Until now the two sides have agreed on little, with prosecutors portraying Lindh as a cold-blooded killer who hated America, and the defense contending he signed up to fight the anti-Taliban northern alliance, not the United States.

The defense said in the motion that "due to the high level of prejudicial publicity, passage of time will be necessary in order that the defendant receive a fair and impartial trial."

The federal courthouse in Alexandria is just a few miles from the Pentagon, where suicide hijackers crashed one of the four airliners they commandeered on Sept. 11.

Pointing out that the indictment describes Lindh's conduct in Yemen, Pakistan and Afghanistan, the defense said it would conduct interviews abroad. Lindh's lawyers also served notice that pretrial hearings would be required on the handling of classified information.

Lindh trained in an Osama bin Laden camp in Pakistan and stayed after he was told bin Laden "had sent forth some fifty people to carry out twenty suicide terrorist operations against the United States and Israel," the indictment charges.

Bin Laden is the No. 1 suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks.

Lindh's lawyers have argued in court and to the news media that the government is relying on a tainted FBI interview of Lindh in Afghanistan, conducted without a lawyer present. The government countered that Lindh signed a paper waiving his right to an attorney.

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# As His Popularity Slumps, Chavez Behaves More Like Fidel

"We have been concerned with some of the actions of Venezuelan President [Hugo] Chavez and his understanding of what a democratic system is all about," U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday. "And we have not been happy with some of the comments he has made with respect to the campaign against terrorism."

"I'm not sure what inspiration he thinks he gets or what benefit he



gives to the Venezuelan people from dropping in and visiting some of these despotic regimes," Mr. Powell went on to say. "We've expressed our disagreement on some of his policies directly to him, and he understands that it is a serious irritant..."

That Mr. Chavez, who took office in 1999, was democratically elected has made it difficult for the U.S. to criticize him or his choice of friends. Yet over the last year, as his popularity has declined, it has become clear that Venezuelans have on their hands a president with a strong dictatorial streak and more than a little fondness for the ways of Fidel Castro.

As Mr. Powell intimated on Tuesday, the U.S. is also concerned about his connections to terrorist states. Though domestic opposition to his regime is growing, it may be too late to effect peaceful change. More likely, Mr. Chavez will continue to tighten control and go down swinging if there is any attempt to remove him.

Shortly after being swept into power by an electorate fed up with government corruption and poverty, the former paratrooper, who led a failed coup d'etat in 1992, began methodically dismantling Venezuela's dysfunctional institutions and replacing them with his own brand of authoritarianism. He argued that in a democracy, as long as the majority agrees, anything goes. Venezuelan society largely acquiesced. The majority poor cheered him, hoping that this messianic strongman would somehow change their miserable circumstances. Some well-to-do Venezuelans also cooperated, as they had with previous governments, so as to curry favor with the ruler, who they thought they could control.

With power consolidated and many of his military buddies in civilian posts, Mr. Chavez has had little trouble governing even as the population has turned against him. Not surprisingly, there is now a high inverse correlation between his popularity and his growing use of Fidelismo tactics. As the former plummets, the latter is in ascendancy.

When Caraqueños marched against the government en masse two weeks ago, Mr. Chavez decreed that, for "security reasons" no news helicopters could fly over the city. His opponents suspected another reason: Aerial photos would have been hard evidence that those against him in the street that day outnumbered his supporters by five to one.

This estimate jibes with recent polls, which suggest that a mere 12% of the population now make up Mr. Chavez's core support. Another 7% qualify as "Chavez-lite," taking his total approval rating just below a measly 20% and explaining why assaults on his critics by his supporters are on the rise.

Like many militant leftists, Mr. Chavez is a lousy economist and it is reasonable to suggest that despite his obnoxious, egomaniacal ways and his aggressiveness against civil society, what has really brought him so much derision in recent months is the sluggish economy.

As long as oil income was high, the Chavez government was able to make ends meet. But falling prices have worsened the fiscal picture significantly. The government has responded as government invariably does, by raising taxes. According to BNP Paribas's Rafael de la Fuente, "the estimated 1.3% of GDP in additional revenues [from new taxes] will do little to solve the government's fiscal problem." Along with Mr. Chavez's fiery anti-market rhetoric, fears about what might come next in the monetary arena are fueling capital flight. In all likelihood, writes Mr. De la Fuente, capital controls will be introduced. Many analysts now expect devaluation.

With his poll numbers sinking, Mr. Chavez has employed ever more radical methods of control. This apparently requires him to devour almost everybody, including those who might have been his ideological allies. He has already tried to take over the labor unions and is locked in a holy war with the Catholic Church. Recently he denounced its hierarchy, calling it a "tumor." Journalists and commentators who were once fans have turned on him and he now rails against the media, accusing his critics of corruption and threatening to shut them down. Perhaps most troubling, he has mobilized groups he calls "Bolivarian circles," modeled on Cuba's Committees to Defend the Revolution. In early January one such gang surrounded the Caracas offices of the newspaper El Nacional chanting, "Tell the truth or we'll burn you."

Mr. Chavez's close relationship to Castro is no secret. What is less clear is just how involved Castro is in Venezuela. Based on his long-standing goal of fomenting revolution in South America, and his commitment to the Colombian guerrillas, it would not be surprising if the rumors that say that the Cuban dictator has lent security and intelligence forces to Mr. Chavez are true. According to Constantine Menges, a former CIA officer who is now a resident scholar at the Hudson Institute in Washington, Castro's failures in the

region made him realize that he "needed to find allies among the military in Latin America and that he needed a new approach that would keep the U.S. from helping democratic governments and political movements from defending themselves until it was too late."

Events in Venezuela fit this strategy. A video released last week that shows Venezuelan military officers meeting with the Colombian rebel group FARC seems to strengthen the theory that Mr. Chavez has designs on Colombia, in keeping with his Bolivarian dreams and Castro's goals. Yet within the military there remain factions with great disdain for Mr. Chavez. Yesterday an Air Force officer announced that some 75% of the military are unhappy with Mr. Chavez's leadership.

## San Valentín de la pagina 3

empeño para que su hogar sea su paraíso.

Primero, procure que todo esté bien acomodado. Prepare la sala de su casa como un lugar de baile, con cintas colgantes, globos y luces. Hagan el mayor espacio posible para ustedes dos. Si les gustan las velas, puede utilizar las que tengan fragancias suaves. No escoja aromas que puedan provocar alergias nasales o que a su pareja no le agraden.

Por último, si le gusta la música, aproveche al máximo aquellas baladas que los hacían suspirar y que hace mucho no escuchan juntos. Aparte de traer buenos recuerdos, también son un buen tema de conversación... o para bailar apretaditos...

Háblense, tóquense, explórense

Si no quiere bailar, puede ver una película que les guste y que puedan disfrutar. Ya sea bailando, viendo películas o realizando otra actividad, hablen de cosas divertidas. No dejen de tocarse ni de explorar aquellas áreas del cuerpo donde su pareja le agrada ser tocada. Si no sabe dónde le gusta que le acaricien, pregunte... la respuesta le puede sorprender. Pueden darse masajes mutuamente, utilizando aceites o lociones aromáticas. Las manos, aparte de producir placer, también pueden comunicar amor y cuidado.

Y... ¿después qué?

Queda a discreción suya qué quiere hacer. Puede hacer el amor en su lugar favorito (no tiene que ser su habitación), o un lugar de su casa donde usted haya tenido fantasías de hacerlo. Por otro lado, si usted o su pareja tienen alguna dificultad física que les impida tener relaciones, no se sienta mal. Hacer el amor no es la única manera de expresar cariño ni de terminar una cita con su pareja. Muchas veces, sólo quedarse juntos y abrazados después de unas horas placenteras es un gran final. Sean creativos.

Recuerde que el Día de los Enamorados sólo se celebra una vez al año, pero el amor de la pareja se debe celebrar cada día. Atrévase a luchar por su amor y no permita que su relación se ahogue en la rutina. ¡Suerte!



Democrat candidate Tony Sanchez visited the Lubbock Democratic office last Friday. He also was the keynote speaker for the Lubbock Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet that was held at the Lubbock Civic Center. (Photo provided by John Cervantes 744-1954)

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