

Wiretap evidence key in Padilla case

by UPI

MIAMI -- Federal prosecutors in the Florida terrorism trial of Jose Padilla intend to introduce transcripts of phone calls between members of an alleged terror cell.

"The phone calls will tell the story of this case," Assistant U.S. Attorney Brian Frazier said in his opening statements in mid-May, The Miami Herald reported.

The FBI alleges it intercepted the calls between Padilla and two other defendants between 1994 and 2001, the newspaper said. They were culled from more than 300,000 calls.

In some conversations, the language features phrases such as "playing football," "going on a picnic" and "zucchini."

"The defendants worried that the FBI was listening to them," Frazier said. "They were right. But the FBI was able to break this group's codes and code system over a period of years."

Transcripts resulting from government wiretaps, such as those being used in federal court in Miami this week, can only be placed in evidence because of the Patriot Act. Previously, they could only be used for intelligence purposes, the Herald reported.

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