

Bomb Goes Off As Exiles Demand Rivero's Freedom

MIAMI (UPI)—Black flags fluttered from cars, a bomb blast jolted a downtown building and work stoppages occurred throughout Miami's "Little Havana" Tuesday in protest over the possible deportation of a "freedom fighter."

Several thousand Cuban exile children also failed to report for classes, but school officials said much of the absenteeism apparently was due to an early morning rainstorm.

Cuban exile sources claimed that thousands were off their jobs in the Miami area and that tourism had been hit hard, but a spot check indicated that fewer than 1,000 actually had walked out. Major resort hotels reported that operations were about normal.

Miami's Cuban exile colony of 100,000 has been up in arms since the arrest of militant refugee leader Felipe Rivero, 43, suspected of a bomb plot against Fidel Castro's Cuban exhibition at Montreal's Expo 67. He faces a deportation hearing May 29.

For the last week, Cubans have been holding peaceful demonstrations in support of Rivero, who favors an armed invasion of Cuba to overthrow Castro. Tuesday morning the demonstrators took a more violent turn and authorities were alerted for possible trouble from hundreds of Cuban teenagers who were to march on the Torch of Friendship monument in Bayfront Park.

The march failed to come up to the predicted size, but police still had their hands full when an estimated six sticks of dynamite exploded at the headquarters of the Cuban Representation in Exile, an anti-Castro organization, about 2:30 a.m.

Police said the blast was "mostly noise." There were no injuries and the only damage was broken windows and a crumpled door.

Freyre Appeals For No Strike

Dr. Ernesto Freyre, head of the organization, had appealed to exiles Monday night not to go on strike in support of Rivero.

Neither Freyre nor police has indicated who was responsible for the blast.

Bomb scares were reported at five other places around Miami, including television station WTVJ which broadcast editorials against the Cuban exile walkout.

Miami High School, which has a large Cuban student body, received a telephone bomb warning.

Mercy Hospital and the Immaculata Academy, a school for girls, also were reported to have received bomb threats.

Hundreds of Cuban exiles loitered at various points along the Tamiami Trail, the main street cutting through the "Little Havana" district.

Large numbers congregated around the Bay of Pigs Veterans' Association headquarters, where some two dozen sympathizers of Rivero claimed to be on a hunger strike in his support.

The current unrest in Miami is the greatest in this exile mecca since the much publicized "invasion" of Cuba by one refugee group failed to materialize three years ago.

Many Cruise City Flying Black Flags

Many Cuban exiles cruised the city flying black flags — as a symbol of mourning — on car radio aerials. Others tied small Cuban flags to their aerials.

Many Cuban establishments which shut down for the day put posters in windows demanding the release of Rivero. American-owned shops in the Cuban district remained open, but it was difficult for anyone in the area Tuesday to get a cup of

coffee, buy gasoline or do any shopping.

A typical sign on a closed shop read: "Deportation No. The Right to Fight, Yes." Another one frequently seen was, "We Demand Freedom for Felipe Rivero."

Miami Mayor Robert King High, in New York Tuesday on business, condemned the Cuban walkout and shutdown.

"Those who have done these acts have done harm to many thousands of Cubans who have become good citizens of Miami and the United States," he said in a statement by phone.

"This city nor any city in the United States simply will not abide violence as a substitute for the orderly procedure of the law," he said.