

"THE DISPATCH"

h. Hudson/Bergen Counties, N.J., January 25, 1979

PAPI TU ERES THE SUN SHINE OF MY LIFE  
TE AMO.

# Letelier plotter just 'obeyed'

By LARRY MARGASAK

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former Chilean secret police agent testified yesterday he knew little about Orlando Letelier when he attached the car bomb that killed the one-time Chilean ambassador.

Michael Townley said he knew that Letelier served in the Marxist government of Chilean President Salvador Allende, but read none of his writings and was unfamiliar with articles written about him.

"All I had to know was that my superiors thought he was an enemy of the state," Townley told a U.S. District Court jury. "I was given an order and I carried it out to the best of my ability."

At the time of his death in September 1976, Letelier was writing and speaking extensively about alleged human rights violations by the Chilean military junta that seized power from Allende in 1973. The U.S. government claims that Letelier's criticism was so effective that the junta ordered him assassinated.

Townley is the government's chief witness in the trial of three anti-Castro Cubans charged with having played roles in the Letelier assassination.

Chile's former ambassador to the United States and an aide were killed Sept. 21, 1976, when a remote-control bomb ripped through their car as they drove around Embassy Row in the nation's capital.

Townley said when he received the assignment to kill Letelier from his superiors at the former Chilean secret police agency, DINA, he had not intended to take part personally in the murder.

"I was ordered to contact the Cubans, have them carry out the mission themselves, and leave the country," Townley said. "When I left (Chile), I had no intention of going to Washington."

Townley testified previously that the Cuban exiles demanded he come along on the mission and plant the bomb personally as a matter of faith. The Cubans had suspected that he was a CIA infiltrator. Townley said.

A grand jury indicted Townley, the Cubans and three former Chilean DINA officials last August in connection with the murder. Townley has since pleaded guilty and became the government's chief witness.

All three Cubans, who the government says are members of the Cuban Nationalist Movement, have pleaded innocent to all charges.

Guillermo Novo Sampol and Alvin Ross Diaz are charged with conspiracy to murder a foreign official, murder of a foreign official, first-degree murders of Letelier and his co-worker, Ronni Moffitt, and murder by use of explosives. Each charge carries a maximum life term.

Guillermo Novo and his brother Ignacio are charged with lying to a grand jury, which carries a maximum punishment of a five-year prison term and a \$10,000 fine.

Ignacio Novo is also charged with failing to report the crime, which carries a maximum of three years in prison and a \$500 fine.

The Chilean government is currently considering a U.S. request for extradition of the three former DINA officials to stand trial for Letelier's murder.