

# Tight security set at Letelier trial

By ROMAN CZAJKOWSKY

Dispatch Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON—Strict courtroom security measures are expected when three leaders of the Union City-based Cuban Nationalist Movement go on trial here tomorrow in connection with the bombing death of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier and an aide, killed in the same blast.

The security measures, including searches of all persons entering the U.S. District Court building where the trial will take place, will be in force because of death threats against the lives of a prosecutor and the judge assigned to the case.

Meanwhile, in Hudson County, many of the Cuban merchants along Bergenline Avenue in Union City and West New York are expected to keep their stores closed tomorrow morning to protest the accusation that Cuban exiles were involved in Letelier's murder.

In addition, La Bloque, the umbrella group of the many anti-Castro Cuban exile organizations in North Hudson, has organized a caravan of approximately three rented buses and dozens of cars to take friends and sympathizers of the accused Cuban exiles here to watch the trial begin tomorrow morning.

The trial culminates a U.S. investigation that lasted more than two years and that led to the indictments last August of five New Jersey Cubans—two of them still fugitives; three former Chilean secret police officials, among them that organization's former chief, alleged to have been the mastermind behind the murder plot; and an American expatriate and erstwhile member of the Chilean secret police who has since pleaded guilty in the case and will be the government's star witness.

Letelier was an outspoken critic of his country's

## North Hudson friends will lend moral support

military junta at the time a remote-control bomb exploded in his car on a Washington street in September, 1976, killing him and a young woman aide, Ronni K. Moffit.

Charged with the murder of Letelier and Miss Moffit were Guillermo Novo of North Bergen and Alvin Ross of Union City. Both were also charged with two counts of lying to a grand jury. A third Cuban, Ignacio Novo, Guillermo's brother, was charged with lying to a grand jury and failing to tell law enforcement officials about the crime after it occurred.

The threats against U.S. District Court Judge Barrington D. Parker and Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugene M. Propper, the chief investigator in the case, were disclosed last month by Propper, who said he received a telephone call from an unidentified man shortly after the indictments were handed down.

Propper said the caller, whom he described as speaking in English but with a Spanish accent, threatened him and Parker and then hung up. Propper declined to say exactly what the caller said.

Meanwhile, last night West New York businessman Miguel Miqueli announced that upon the urgings of La Bloque, he and a group of approximately 10 other Cuban merchants have organized a movement to persuade the many Cuban merchants not to open their stores until noon tomorrow.

He said many of the merchants will be personally notified of this movement today. Miqueli, who owns a Bergenline Avenue jewelry shop, said he expected all of them to comply with the request. In addition,

Miqueli added, he understands that "a lot of people" will be going on the caravan to Washington.

Only the Novo brothers and Ross will be tried before Judge Barrington. So far, the Chilean government has refused a U.S. request to extradite the Chileans accused in the case.

All three Cubans going on trial tomorrow have pleaded innocent.

Two other Cubans from the Northern New Jersey area were charged with murder in the bombing and are still sought by the FBI. They are Virgilio Paz of Union City and Jose Dionisio of Elizabeth.

The grand jury indictment never identified the person who actually triggered the bomb that killed Letelier and Moffit. But it said Guillermo Novo, Dionisio, Ross and Paz "performed...the functions in the conspiracy of providing explosives, detonating devices and manpower to assist" the Chilean secret police in killing Letelier.

At the time of his death, Letelier was working for a Washington think tank, the Institute for Policy Studies. Letelier was ambassador to the U.S. and later foreign minister in the government of the late Salvador Allende, a democratically-elected Marxist overthrown and killed in a coup in 1973.

Federal prosecutors have said the Chilean secret police recruited the New Jersey men for Letelier's murder, possibly in exchange for pledges of assistance in their anti-Communist, anti-Castro activities.

But the government never directly tied the current Chilean junta to the plot.