



**Alvin Ross Diaz**  
... told informer?

# 'Confession' Is Alleged in Letelier Case

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WASHINGTON — The leader of the Cuban Nationalist Movement admitted to a cellmate his group's involvement in the 1976 assassination of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier, the cellmate — now a government informant — testified Friday.

A second prison informant told U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker Jr. that another Cuban, Alvin Ross Diaz of Union City, N.J., told him that the Cuban Nationalist Movement also had plans to blow up Soviet ships in U.S. ports using booby-trapped remote-controlled motorboats. Ross also is on trial here in connection with Letelier's murder.

**JUDGE PARKER** ordered that the testimony of both informants against Guillermo Novo Sampol, the movement leader, and Ross be given out of the jury's presence so he could determine if the conversations would be legally admissible in the case.

Three Cubans, Ross, Novo and his brother Ignacio Novo Sampol, are charged in connection with Letelier's 1976 death in a car bombing on Embassy Row in downtown Washington.

Defense attorneys Paul Goldberger and Lawrence Dubin argued that the two informants might have illegally coerced — or even made up — the incriminating admissions from the defendants in order to get light treatment for their own crimes.

If Parker agrees that the alleged confessions weren't volunteered by the two Cubans, the jury will not be allowed to hear the informants. Parker is expected to rule Monday.

The testimony of Novo's cellmate, convicted weapons dealer Antonio Polytarides, 33, could be especially helpful to prosecutors because it ties Novo directly to the Letelier killing.

**POLYTARIDES TOLD** the judge that he had been placed in the Metropolitan Corrections Center in New York City as a federal informant. His assignment, he said, was to try to arrange weapons sales to other prisoners, then pass the information along to the U.S. Secret Service.

Polytarides said he came into contact with Guillermo Novo — who was held in the same jail from May 1978 until the trial — through a Cuban drug dealer named Luis Sotomayer.

Sotomayer had asked to buy 10 sub-machineguns, five for his gang and five for the Cuban Nationalist Movement, Polytarides said. He added that when he asked Sotomayer what the Cuban Nationalist Movement was, Sotomayer replied that it was the group that was "responsible for the Letelier bombing."

A few weeks later, Polytarides said he met Novo in their cellblock. "I said, 'I know you,'" Polytarides told the judge. "Sotomayer told me your group arranged for the Letelier bombing."

"He [Novo] said, 'Yes, our group is responsible,'" Polytarides said.