

F.B.I. IS SAID TO LINK TOWNLEY AND CUBAN

Investigation Into Killing of Chilean Exile Is Reported to Uncover Telephone Contacts

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WASHINGTON, April 19—The Federal Bureau of Investigation has uncovered telephone records linking an American recently extradited from Chile with anti-Castro Cubans suspected of the murder of a former Chilean Ambassador in Washington in September 1976, sources familiar with the case said today.

The informants said the records showed that the American, Michael V. Townley, had been in touch with the Cubans at least twice before the Chilean, Orlando Letelier, was killed by a bomb placed under his car.

Earlier this month, Mr. Townley, who has lived in Chile since 1958, testified before a judge in Santiago that he had been in the United States before the killing but that he had no connection with it.

The informants said today that Mr. Townley made two calls, one to a bar in Union City, N.J., frequented by Cuban radicals, and the other to the Cliffside Park, N.J., home of a suspect in the bombing death of Mr. Letelier in the late summer of 1976, shortly after Mr. Townley arrived in the United States.

This is the first indication to become public that there is documentary evidence linking Mr. Townley and anti-Castro Cubans who are suspected of having rigged and detonated a bomb under Mr. Letelier's car, also killing Ronni K. Moffitt, who was riding with him.

According to Government sources, Mr. Townley is in Federal custody at an undisclosed location in the Washington area after being brought from Chile by F.B.I. agents two weeks ago. Federal investigators say they believe that Mr. Townley, who was described by the Chilean judge who questioned him, Juana González, as a member of the nation's secret police, could provide the link between the death of Mr. Letelier and the Chilean intelligence service, formerly known as the National Intelligence Directorate, or Dina.

Associates of Mr. Letelier's at the Institute for Policy Studies, a Washington political research group, have charged that the exiled former ambassador was murdered on the orders of members of the Government of General Augusto Pinochet in a plot launched by Dina. General Pinochet has denied complicity in the death.

The telephone records are part of a growing web of evidence that trace Mr. Townley's activities after he came to the United States carrying an official Chilean passport with a false name in the summer of 1976. He was identified, for instance, by Jack Holcomb, president of Audio Intelligence Devices Inc. of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., as the buyer of electronic equipment on behalf of the Chilean Government. Federal sources have said that the equipment was unconnected with the murder.

Sources familiar with the case declined to name the persons to whom Mr. Townley's calls were said to have been directed, but they are reported to be known to Federal agents and clearly part of a tight group implicated in the murder.

2 Cuban Exiles Arrested

Last week F.B.I. agents arrested two anti-Castro Cuban exiles. Alvin Ross Diaz, 45 years old, was arrested on charges stemming from the 1977 bombing of a Union City, N.J., company that was shipping medical supplies to Cuba by way of Montreal.

Guillermo Novo, 38, who was reportedly in Chile in early 1976, was arrested on charges of probation violation that grew out of a conviction in 1969 of having conspired to bomb Cuba's consulate and trade mission in Montreal.

According to sources quoted in The Washington Star, Mr. Diaz at one time operated the C & P novelty company in Union City where explosives and detonation devices were manufactured. The Star sources said Federal agents were comparing materials from that shop with fragments of the device that killed Mr. Letelier.

There are two investigative targets in the Letelier murder. Federal agents are seeking to prosecute those who actually took part in the killing as well as those who may have planned the murders.

Half the charge that the murders were planned by the Chilean intelligence service is correct, it poses difficult diplomatic questions for the United States and serious political implications for President Pinochet's Government.

General Pinochet's opponents charge that if Dina planned and carried out the murder it could not have been done without the President's approval.

Federal agents are relying partly on the belief that Mr. Townley may choose to cooperate because of his anger over the Chilean Government's willingness to turn him over to the United States. Half his testimony gave hard evidence against Chilean officials, the United States could obtain an indictment of them in absentia.