

F. B. I. GIVEN DETAILS IN LETELIER KILLING

Agent Says Townley Admits Role in Chilean's Assassination

By WOLFGANG SAXON

A Federal agent told a United States magistrate in Newark yesterday that a 35-year-old American suspect in the assassination of Orlando Letelier, a Chilean exile leader, had given to the Federal Bureau of Investigation the details of the 1976 slaying in Washington and his own part in it.

The testimony came from Special Agent L. Carter Cornick of the F.B.I., who told the magistrate, Serena Perretti, that he accompanied Michael V. Townley when Mr. Townley was expelled from Santiago on April 8.

Anti-Castro Cubans Involved

Mr. Townley, an electronics technician and longtime resident of Chile, then underwent weeks of questioning during which he agreed to plead guilty to one charge of conspiracy to murder Mr. Letelier, Mr. Cornick said in Newark Federal Court.

Mr. Townley has been described as an operative for the Chilean intelligence service and was said to have agreed to cooperate with the Government after he was charged on April 26.

Mr. Cornick, citing Mr. Townley's depositions, said the assassination plot involved Mr. Townley and several anti-Castro Cubans from New Jersey, with whom Mr. Townley met and made the bomb that killed Mr. Letelier. The bomb was planted under Mr. Letelier's car and detonated by remote control. Also killed

U.S. Gets Details in Letelier Plot

Continued From Page 1

in the explosion on Sept. 21, 1976, was an associate of Mr. Letelier's, Ronni K. Moffitt.

Mr. Letelier was a close associate of President Salvador Allende Gossens of Chile, who was killed in a military coup in 1973. He served President Allende as ambassador to Washington, foreign minister and defense minister.

Yesterday's hearing involved a Government request for the removal to Washington of one of the Cuban suspects in the case, Alvin Ross Diaz, 45, of Union City, N.J. Magistrate Perretti ruled that Mr. Ross, one of five members of a Cuban Nationalist Movement accused of conspiring to murder, could be taken to Washington to face prosecution.

According to Mr. Cornick, Mr. Townley was sent to the United States from Chile in 1976 on assignment from the Chilean secret service, DINA, to kill Mr. Letelier. He reportedly arrived in New York that September and brought electric igniters for a bomb.

Mr. Cornick, the principal F.B.I. agent on the case, said Mr. Townley had met here with an agent of the Chilean secret police who had kept Mr. Letelier under surveillance before the assassination.

Mr. Townley then reportedly met with Mr. Ross and four other Cubans in a

motel at North Bergen, N.J., and got their promise to aid in the plot. Mr. Cornick said Mr. Townley had not mentioned any payments to be made to the Cubans or their organization.

Some days later, Mr. Townley and one of the Cubans, Virgilio Paz, now a fugitive, went to Newark to acquire explosives, and Mr. Townley made a bomb, Mr. Cornick said. Mr. Townley then drove to Washington, where he, Mr. Paz and José Suarez Esquivel placed the bomb under Mr. Letelier's car, he said.

Mr. Townley then is said to have returned to New Jersey by plane in order not to be in the capital at the time of the slaying. Mr. Letelier was killed two days later.

Mr. Cornick indicated that the F.B.I. had later found explosive devices at an apartment that had been occupied by Mr. Ross and was able to identify them as materials used in the bombing.

The F.B.I. agent's disclosures at a magistrate's hearing were unexpected. Agents and lawyers had gone to court in case they had to reveal such details to back up their request for taking Mr. Ross to Washington.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Eugene M. Propper, indictments in the Letelier case are expected by the end of the summer.