

Arocena's lawyer to be tried on gun charge

MIAMI (UPI)—Authorities say they have connected a machine gun allegedly owned by a lawyer for Eduardo Arocena, said by the FBI to be the head of the anti-Castro terrorist organization Omega 7, to a scheme to kill a drug trafficker.

The lawyer, Miguel Orta, is scheduled to stand trial here March 12 on a felony charge of possessing a MAC 10 machine gun equipped with a silencer, a detective said.

If convicted, Orta, 32, faces automatic dismissal from the Florida bar.

Orta agreed two weeks ago to defend Arocena, who is accused of being the mysterious "Omar" who issued Omega 7 communiques.

Lt. Dan Flynn of Metro Police's Organized Crime

Bureau said yesterday that Orta was to be the go-between who would deliver the illegal weapon to one of his clients, an unidentified Colombian man.

Police said they connected Orta to the Colombian through another client, burglary suspect Dominic Guerassio.

On Jan. 24, Orta was arrested at his Miami office and charged with monitoring a series of conversations with Guerassio without his consent. Florida law prohibits recording a conversation unless both parties consent.

Guerassio told Orta of his financial troubles, a Metro detective said. Guerassio told authorities Orta sent him to another client, the unidentified Colombian, who said he would hire Guerassio to commit a homicide.

Guerassio allegedly said the Colombian gave him a MAC 10 fixed with a silencer and instructed him to kill a rival in the drug trade. Guerassio said he took the gun and promised to kill the man, but instead sold the gun and kept the money.

Federal prosecutors said they were concerned about the allegations.

"Today is the first that I've heard of this," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Tabak, in charge of the New York prosecution.

"We are certainly going to bring it to the attention of the court and to the attention of Mr. Arocena," Tabak said, noting he would raise the issue at a hearing Friday in New York.

"The government is concerned that there will be

a conflict of interest between the defense attorney preparing his own case and having sufficient time to prepare Mr. Arocena's case," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Frederick Mann in Miami.

Arocena faces charges of conspiring in 1976 to assassinate Raul Roa Kouri, a Cuban diplomat at the United Nations, and 14 bombings in Manhattan and Miami. He could face up to life plus 70 years if convicted.

Arocena is being held in a federal prison in New York state in lieu of \$750,000 bail pending his trial in April.

Cuban-Americans in the North Hudson area have raised thousands of dollars for Arocena's bail and defense.