



Eduardo Arocena, reputed mastermind of Omega-7, who has been indicted on charges of attempting to murder the Cuban ambassador to the United Nations and planting bombs, is shown in FBI custody in Miami in July. (UPI)

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Anti-Castro Cubans in Hudson outraged by Omega 7 indictment

By Raul Vicente Jr.

The indictment yesterday of reputed Omega-7 leader Eduardo Arocena of Newark on charges of conspiracy to murder the Cuban ambassador to the United Nations and several bombing attempts has fueled outrage from his Union City supporters.

According to Silvio Mancha, secretary of the Union City-based Cuban Defense League, the 40-year-old Arocena has not been treated fairly since his arrest last July. Three days ago, the CDL finished raising \$250,000 in bail money to try to release Arocena from the Otisville Federal Corrections Facility.

Mancha said that on two occasions his organization, which raises money for legal

Eduardo Arocena held as leader of terrorists

fees and bail, sent two lawyers to the U.S District Court and both were turned down.

"We don't understand why the government is acting in this way," said Mancha. "They are dealing with Arocena as if he has already been pronounced guilty and they just want to go through the motions to get it over with."

He said that Frank Wohl, a court-appointed attorney, met with his group's board of directors and expressed a sincere desire to defend Arocena, but Arocena has sent word to the group that he wishes to be

represented by a state-appointed lawyer.

"Arocena said he did not feel comfortable with this attorney," said Mancha. "We have raised money for his bail, which was originally set at \$1 million and later reduced to \$250,000. After we raised the money, the bail was revoked. Now he is indicted."

According to previous FBI testimony, Arocena has confessed to being the leader of the Omega-7, a group which has claimed responsibility for various terroristic acts ranging from murder to 30 bombings.

Mancha said that in interviews with Arocena's sister, one of only two people permitted to visit him, she claims that her brother flatly denies ever confessing to being leader of the Omega-7.

"His sister said that Arocena has told the FBI to bring him to trial and show proof that he has engaged in terroristic activities," said Mancha.

The Union City defense league secretary said that, along with Arocena, six additional men have been jailed in connection with Omega-7.

He said that Eduardo Ochoa, a West New Yorker, has been behind bars for 18 months because he is in contempt of the

Reputed leader of Omega 7 indicted by feds as terrorist

NEW YORK (UPI) — The reputed leader of the antiCastro terrorist group Omega 7 was indicted Wednesday on charges of attempting to murder the Cuban U.N. ambassador and of planting 14 bombs in New York City and Miami.

The New York bombings include the simultaneous blasts at Lincoln Center and at the Cuban Mission to the U.N. Dec. 28, 1978. One passer-by was injured.

Eduardo Arocena, 40, a former New Jersey longshoreman, was indicted by a federal grand jury in Manhattan on charges of attempted murder, conspiracy to murder and on the bombing charges.

FBI agents have testified Arocena confessed he was the infamous "Omar" — the commander-in-chief of Omega 7.

"Eduardo Arocena is the self-admitted leader of Omega 7,"

FBI spokesman Kenneth Walton said at a Manhattan news conference. "He called himself Omar."

Omega 7 is a tightly knit group of Cuban exiles dedicated to the overthrow of Cuban President Fidel Castro. FBI officials consider it one of the most active terrorist organizations in the United States.

The Cuban-born Arocena has been in prison in Otisville, N.Y., since his arrest on explosives charges in Miami in July.

A Cuban defense fund based in Union City, N.J., last week raised his \$250,000 bail, but before Arocena was released, a federal judge revoked any bail for Arocena on grounds there would be a "risk of danger" if he were released.

A federal grand jury in U.S. District Court in Manhattan

returned the seven-count indictment against Arocena.

It accused Arocena of conspiracy to murder and attempted murder in the aborted car-bombing of Cuban U.N. Ambassador Raul Roa in 1980 outside the ambassador's upper East Side residence.

The remote-control bomb attached under the ambassador's limousine fell off as the car was parked and was never detonated.

FBI agents testified at a preliminary hearing Arocena said he refused to detonate the active bomb as the ambassador got into the limo because a group of school girls was walking by.

The indictment also accused Arocena of the simultaneous bombings Dec. 28, 1978, of Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center and the Cuban Mission to the United Nations. A man walking past the Cuban Mission was in-

jured in the blast.

In Miami, two grand juries also returned indictments against Arocena. Federal authorities in Miami announced Wednesday that Arocena was charged in 11 bombings and attempted bombings in the Miami area and with weapons violations.

U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, who held the news conference at his Manhattan office, said Arocena will be arraigned Jan. 5. If convicted, he could face a maximum penalty of life plus 70 years.

Asked whether the indictment would break "the back" of Omega 7, Walton said, "One never breaks a terrorist organization. The leaders are always replaced by someone else."

Giuliani and Walton said the investigation is continuing.

Cubans in Hudson are outraged

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federal grand jury. Mancha added that Ochoa's mother brought back messages from him where he said, "I don't why I have been chosen. I don't know anything about this matter."

"These men are in jail

because they would not talk about Castro agents or activities anyone could hear on the street.

They fear for the lives of their families because they believe there are as many as 1,000 Castro agents in the U.S.," said Mancha.

According to the Union City group, which includes members of Abdala and the Ex-Political Prisoners of Cuba, the fate of Ochoa and the other five prisoners is yet to be announced by the federal government.

Mancha said that one of the

men received so little medical attention at the facility in New York, he finally had to have one of his eyes removed. Another Cuban prisoner has been transferred to a facility in Missouri, and is being force fed after a self-motivated hunger strike left him almost lifeless.