



Suspect outside FBI building

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Arrest is welcomed, suspected
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CHERYL BROWNSTEIN-SANTIAGO
Miami News Reporter

Reaction in Miami's Cuban-American community to the capture of the alleged chief of Omega 7 ranged from subdued support for the accused terrorist to relief that he had been arrested.

The arrest of Eduardo Arocena was welcomed by Andrés Gómez, national committee member of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group that advocates closer relations between the United States and Cuba.

Gómez recalled last night the death in 1979 of Carlos Muñoz, a brigade national committee member who was gunned down on a street in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Omega 7 claimed responsibility for the shooting.

"Clearly, we are satisfied that there is an arrest of a person that the FBI itself says is the head of Omega 7," Gómez added. "But at the same time, we ask why others ... are still out on the street, and the FBI knows who they are and what they do."

Spokesmen for Alpha 66 and Bay of Pigs Veterans Association Brigade 2506, two anti-communist Cuban exile groups, said they do not support terrorism, but respect all efforts to fight communism.

"In this the authorities want to have a scapegoat so that their performance doesn't turn out in the public mind the way it has in other cases, which is weak," said Armando Calderín, secretary of Brigade 2506. "Certainly."

FBI finds weapons cache at site of Omega 7 arrest

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AL QUINTANA and JEFF BENKOE
Miami News Reporters

The FBI seized a cache of weapons early today at the Little Havana apartment where agents earlier arrested Eduardo Arocena, the alleged mastermind of the anti-Castro terrorist group Omega 7.

Among the weapons recovered at the one-room apartment at 3034 SW 7th St. were a sub-machine gun, several .45 caliber handguns with silencers, Mac-10 handguns, knives, two walkie-talkies, electronic components, a remote control switch and what appeared to be a man's wig, FBI agents said.

Armed with a search warrant, agents spent at least three hours late last night and early this morning confiscating items from the efficiency apartment. The items seized filled 15 to 20 clear plastic bags.

Other items seen by agents seized included a typewriter, a suitcase, a tote bag, papers, kitchen pots and silverware.

FBI agents who conducted the search would not disclose the exact number of weapons seized and FBI spokesman Chris Mazella said details of the search would not be made public before sometime today.

"Weapons were seized but we're not prepared to say what at this point," Mazella said. "They must take an inventory."

Arocena, who federal authorities believe to be "Omar," the cryptic name for Omega 7's leader, has been a fugitive since an arrest warrant was issued for him in October 1982 in connection with the attempted murder of a Cuban diplomat in New York.

Arocena was formally charged with interstate transportation of explosives and conspiracy in connection with the attempt to kill the Cuban ambassador, Raul Roa Kouri, on March 25, 1980.

The tiny, feared anti-Castro terrorist group, has been seriously damaged by the capture of Arocena, the FBI says.

"The arrest will have a serious impact on the operations of this organization," said Joseph Corless, special agent in charge of the FBI office in Miami.

Fritz Mann, assistant U.S. Attorney in Miami, added: "He's a big fish. He's a major figure in Omega 7. He's the leader."

FBI agents arrested Arocena at 12:45 p.m. yesterday at the SW 7th Street apartment. As many as 20 agents have kept the house under surveillance around the clock for the past month, Corless said. He would not say how they learned of Arocena's location.

The federal government filed a complaint in federal court in New York in October, alleging that Arocena and four others had tried to kill a Cuban diplomat by planting a bomb under his car in New York in 1980. A federal grand jury in New York is now expected to consider an indictment.

Omega 7 claimed responsibility for the September 1980 slaying in New York City of Cuban U.N. mission attache Feliz García Rodríguez and the November 1979 murder of Eulalio Negrín, a member of the Committee

Please see OMEGA, 4A

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The Miami News - MICHAEL DELANEY

An FBI agent takes seized weapons out of an apartment where Eduardo Arocena was arrested

of 75, an exile group which supported dialog with Cuban President Fidel Castro.

Callers claiming to belong to the terrorist group also have claimed responsibility, in phone calls to news organizations, for more than 20 bombings of various diplomatic offices and newspapers.

The one-room apartment where Arocena was arrested is connected to the rear of a house. A neighbor, Madeline Remos, said she watched as five or six agents, with guns drawn, jumped a fence at El Sorrento restaurant, at 3059 SW 8th St, behind the house.

"It was incredible," she said. "They were coming from everywhere." Remos said she had seen Arocena in the house during the past several weeks. The owners of the house would not talk to reporters.

While he was in hiding, Arocena

was helped by Cuban-Americans in Miami, the FBI's Corless said. Since he has become a fugitive, Arocena he has spent most of his time in Miami, Corless added.

Arocena's wife, who lives at 10881 SW 14th Terr., could not be reached following the arrest.

Corless said there would be no more arrests.

When Arocena disappeared in October, four others — Pedro Ramon, Eduardo Losada Fernandez, Andres Garcia and Alberto Perez, all of New Jersey — were arrested. They are awaiting trial.

At a hearing yesterday, U.S. Magistrate Peter Nimkoff ordered Arocena, 40, held without bond at the government's request.

"The agent has been a fugitive by his own admission to FBI agents," Mann said. "During that time, he has managed to elude authorities by changing his appearance, location

and identification." Mann didn't elaborate in the courtroom and declined to comment on the subject outside of court.

Four U.S. marshals surrounded Arocena as he sat in a middle seat in the front row of the jury box in the courtroom.

Short and squat, Arocena wore a blue, short-sleeved polo shirt, blue jeans and black shoes. He picked at his nails and played with his mustache throughout the hearing.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Fritz Mann said the balding Arocena had changed his hair color recently. At the hearing, his dark hair was curly. In earlier pictures, his hair was straight.

The government alleges that Arocena and the others carried explosives from New Jersey into New York after renting a car at Newark Airport on March 25, 1980.

That same day, federal authori-

ties say, they tried to kill Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations Raul Roa-Kouri.

The government says the terrorists planted a remote control bomb — made of Composition C-4, a powerful explosive used by the military, blasting caps and a detonating cord — underneath the car, which was parked on a Manhattan street. When Roa-Kouri drove off, the five tried to detonate it, but the bomb fell from the car, federal officials say.

The FBI said a confidential informant — who said he helped bring the bomb into New York — tipped them off to the attempted bombing.

Arocena will be back in Miami federal court on Tuesday at 2 p.m., when a formal bond hearing will be held. Prosecutors will ask that Arocena be moved to New York to face the criminal charges.