

# Judge Sentences Omega 7 Leader To Life in Prison

## Anti-Castro Chief Guilty in Murder and Blasts

By ARNOLD H. LUBASCH

A life sentence and an additional 35 years in prison were imposed yesterday on Eduardo Arocena, a Cuban exile convicted of murder and terrorist bombings as the head of an anti-Castro group called Omega 7.

Judge Robert J. Ward, who imposed the sentence in Federal District Court in Manhattan, said the Government had presented proof that Mr. Arocena was the group's "founder, leader and chief bomb maker."

Under Federal law, the 41-year-old defendant could be eligible for parole after serving 10 years of his sentence, but authorities said he would probably be kept in prison much longer, perhaps for life.

Mr. Arocena made an impassioned speech at his sentencing, saying that if patriotic sacrifices and democratic beliefs made him a terrorist, "then I'm the greatest terrorist in the world."

### 'Victim of a Witch Hunt'

"I'm an anti-Communist to the death," he exclaimed, standing in the small, crowded courtroom, with an interpreter translating his words from Spanish into English.

"I have been the victim of a witch hunt," he said, contending that Federal authorities had fabricated evidence against him. Mr. Arocena, who wore a light gray suit, added, "I will never bow to them."

The chief prosecutor, Michael L. Tabak, told Judge Ward that the Government regarded Mr. Arocena's case as "extremely important."

"He is a man who should not be on



The New York Times/Marilyn Church  
Eduardo Arocena speaking after being sentenced by Judge Robert J. Ward of Federal District Court in Manhattan. Behind him are Humberto J. Aguilar, right, a defense lawyer, and Michael L. Tabak, chief prosecutor.

the streets as long as he is capable of making a bomb or pulling a trigger," Mr. Tabak said.

On Sept. 22, after a six-week trial, Mr. Arocena was found guilty of all the charges against him, except one bombing charge.

He was convicted of ordering the 1980 murder of an attaché at Cuba's Mission to the United Nations, Felix Garcia Rodriguez, who was shot to death in Queens. The charges against him also included trying to kill Dr. Raul Roa Kouri, Cuba's delegate to the United Nations, and bombing foreign consulates and other targets.

He was also accused of ordering the 1979 murder of a Cuban exile in New Jersey, Eulalio Jose Negrin, but that was not a Federal crime because the victim was not a foreign official.

### Life Term in Murder

Judge Ward gave the life sentence to Mr. Arocena for the murder of the Cuban attaché, a Federal charge carrying a mandatory life term, and added sentences ranging from 5 to 20 years

for other charges.

Mr. Tabak said in the trial that Omega 7 had committed no terrorist acts since Mr. Arocena's arrest more than a year ago.

According to the prosecutors, Mr. Tabak and Bruce A. Green, the defendant was "Omar," the Omega 7 leader who operated for years in New York, New Jersey and Florida.

"Arocena organized Omega 7 on Sept. 11, 1974, for the purpose of carrying out terrorist murders and bombings exclusively within the United States," the prosecutors said in a sen-

tencing memorandum.

The defendant testified in his trial that Federal agents had drugged him and tried to force him to become an informer, but that he had refused to cooperate. His lawyers, Humberto J. Aguilar and Luis Fernandez, said he would appeal.

Mr. Arocena still faces bombing charges in Florida and possible charges in the New Jersey case. Three admitted members of Omega 7 have pleaded guilty to related charges, and several suspected members are in jail for contempt of court.