

Cuban Refugee Leader Slain in Union City

By ROBERT D. McFADDEN

The director of a Cuban refugee services center, whose moderate stance had apparently prompted a bombing and numerous threats on his life, was slain, apparently by anti-Castro extremists, in a hail of gunfire on a street in downtown Union City, N.J.

The victim, Eulalio José Negrín, was a member of the Committee of 75, a group that went to Cuba last year and, in meetings with President Fidel Castro and other officials, negotiated the release of 3,000 political prisoners. The visit also resulted in an agreement to permit thousands of Cubans living in the United States to return to visit relatives and friends for the first time in two decades since the Cuban revolution.

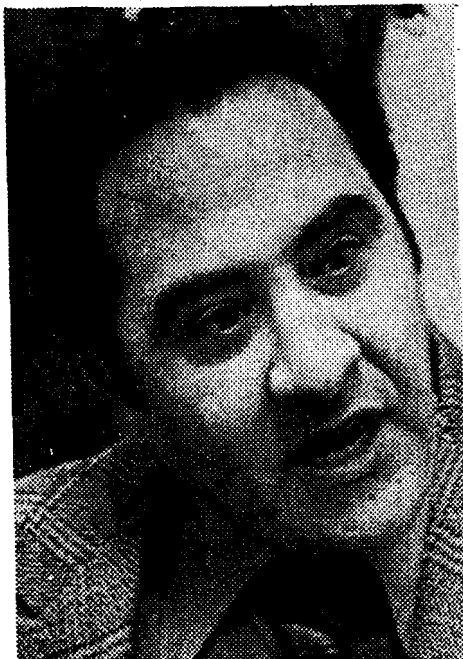
Last night, nine hours after the shooting, an anonymous male caller to the office of The Associated Press in New York claimed responsibility for the murder on behalf of Omega 7, an anti-Castro terrorist organization that has claimed responsibility for a number of bombings in the New York metropolitan area, including one at the headquarters of Mr. Negrín's organization last spring.

More 'Executions' Promised

"We will continue with these executions until we have eliminated all of the traitors living in this country," the caller was quoted as having said in an Hispanic accent.

Mr. Negrín, the 37-year-old director of the New Jersey Cuban Program in Weehawken, was killed by a fusillade of semi-automatic weapons fire as he stepped into his car on 10th Street between Central and Summit Avenues at 9:50 A.M., the police said.

His 12-year-old son, Richard, was sitting in the car as the killers, described by witnesses as two men wearing ski masks and riding in a silver car with a red top, drew up, opened fire and sped away. Five bullets struck Mr. Negrín in the upper body, the police said, but his son was not hit.



Associated Press

Eulalio José Negrín

Mr. Negrín was alive when Union City police officers reached the scene, but he was pronounced dead on arrival at Riverside General Hospital in nearby Secaucus. The police said the victim, who lived at 3804 New York Avenue in Union City, had gone to the downtown area on personal business. No detailed description of the killers was available, the police said.

Second Member of Group Slain

Mr. Negrín was the second member of the Committee of 75 to be slain this year. The first, Carlos Muñoz, a travel agent, was shot to death in San Juan, P.R., last May. He was attempting to arrange a trip to Cuba at the time, authorities said.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as local and Hudson County police authorities, joined the investigation of the shooting.

Investigators said they were checking

on numerous anti-Castro factions in Hudson County for clues in the slaying.

Omega 7 is described by Federal law enforcement authorities as a loosely organized, fervidly anti-Castro Cuban nationalist group based in the New York-New Jersey area. Three members of the clandestine group were convicted in the bombing death of Orlando Letelier, the former Chilean Ambassador to the United States. Omega 7 has claimed responsibility for more than a dozen bombings in the metropolitan area since early 1975.

At the time of the storefront bombing on March 25, Mr. Negrín and an associate, the Rev. Andres Reyes of the Holy Family Church in Union City, said at a news conference amid the rubble that the F.B.I. and local authorities had "done nothing" in response to their reports of at least 10 death threats.

Prominent Figure in Area

The two men contended that the authorities knew the identity of the terrorists but had nonetheless taken no action. At the time, and again yesterday, the police declined to comment on this allegation.

Mr. Negrín in recent years had become a prominent figure in the predominantly Hispanic Hudson County community of Union City, a 1.4-square-mile city that has become the hub of the second largest concentration of Cubans in the country, after Miami.

In all, about 250,000 Cubans are believed by community leaders to reside in an area that includes Union City, Weehawken, West New York, Elizabeth and other towns. Dozens of Cuban organizations, ranging from extremist anti-Castro groups to others of more moderate persuasion, have sprung up in the area.

Political divisions have become even more pronounced as the relationship between the Castro regime and the Cuban community in this country has undergone change.