

Terrorism May Rise, FBI Says

1-15-80-8C

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Just four days before a federal grand jury starts investigating terrorism in South Florida's Cuban community, the FBI said Monday the repeated bombings of cigar-maker Orlando Padron's factory may signify the end of Miami's role as a "neutral zone" among terrorists.

The FBI in Miami has been told that long-time Cuban extremist leaders had declared Miami off-limits to bombings and assassination.

"We hear that leaders of the past who live in Miami didn't want the area heated up. They declared the area a neutral zone," said an FBI spokesman. "But younger hotheads have been wanting to do something."

PADRON'S Flagler Street factory was bombed Sunday morning and also last July. The FBI spokesman said the bombings may be the "beginning" of new terrorist activity. The last major wave of exile terrorist bombings in Miami occurred during 1975 and only sporadically since then.

Padron was among the Cuban exiles who traveled to Cuba in 1978 to talk with Cuban president Fidel Castro about the release of political prisoners in Cuba.

The weekend bombing was the first of three within two days, all apparently the work of anti-Castro terrorists. Sunday evening, the Manhattan office of Aeroflot, the Soviet airline was bombed; another explosion rocked the Cuban consulate in Montreal early Monday morning.

Last week, six Cuban exiles were summoned to appear before a federal grand jury that will convene in Miami Friday. One witness is a pro-dialog leader; the other five are known for anti-Castro activities. The grand jury is expected to investigate South Florida terrorist threats.

BUT THE SCENE of most anti-Castro violence during the past year has been the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area. Last year, both the Cuban and Soviet missions to the United Nations were bombed. A dialog participant from New Jersey was murdered last month in Union City, across the Hudson River from New York.

Credit for the incidents was taken by the anti-Castro group Omega 7. Omega 7 also claimed responsibility for the bombing of Padron's factory early Sunday morning.

"Omega 7 exists mainly as a pseudonym for anyone who engages in these activities," said the FBI spokesman. "Previous names like Cero and M-17 seem to have been discontinued."