

EDITORIALS

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Time to end the bloodshed

It's a sorry note when the U.S. government feels obligated to apologize for anything to the Castro regime. But Secretary of State Muskie was right and proper in quickly extending the nation's regrets over the assassination of a Cuban diplomat in Queens yesterday.

It doesn't matter whether the victim, Feliz Garcia Rodriguez, was a spy or not. This country will not tolerate such cowardly acts of terrorism on its soil. The public is not fooled for one second by the claims of bloodstained outfits like Omega 7 that a murder like this one is the work of "heroic freedom fighters."

As far as Americans are concerned, the sooner the people responsible for this cold-blooded slaying are rounded up and tossed in prison, the better.

And it's high time that message sank in with the Cuban-American community.

We recognize, of course, that the vast majority of Cuban-Americans have nothing to do with the gangsters of Omega 7. The majority may be universally anti-Castro, but they remain peaceful, law-abiding citizens.

Nevertheless, there is a blanket of silence that falls over the community in the wake of events like the killing of Garcia Rodriguez or the wave of bombings for which Omega 7 has claimed responsibility during the past few years. That silence finally must end.

Naturally we don't expect Cuban-Americans to stand up and denounce the terrorists publicly by name. That could result in fatal retaliation.

But it is perfectly possible for members of the community to help the police quietly with information without personal exposure. They have an obligation to do that not only for the sake of their adopted homeland, but for themselves and the legitimate anti-Castro movement which they support.

As for the terrorist hooligans who pulled off yesterday's killing, if they are so eager to use their guns, then let them pack up and head for the mountains of Cuba where they can show the world how much courage they really have—if any—fighting against Castro's repression.