

Negrin likes the media spotlight...

...But the previously-obscure Cuban exile says he doesn't enjoy the heat

By PAUL MOSES

Eulalio Negrin slouched on a bench in the Union City police station yesterday afternoon, sucking a hand-rolled cigar while discussing his explosion into prominence—and seeking relief from the enemies he believes are out to kill him.

With intense brown eyes and dark hair that flips over his forehead, Negrin shook his head slowly, as if in disbelief.

For years, the 38-year-old Cuban exile struggled to get into the public eye, running disastrous campaigns for the state Senate and for mayor of Union City, where he lives. But in a region where political might is highly respected, he was a bluffer; a politician with many ideas, but no supporters.

Negrin, who said he still works at the General Motors plant in Englewood, finally crept into the spotlight when he joined a group of exiles who were negotiating the release of prisoners from communist Cuba.

And then anti-Castro revolutionaries, who believed him to be a traitor, bombed a tiny Weehawken community action storefront he ran, according to the FBI.

The papers and television stations called him a leader because of the bombing.

Some members of the Cuban exile community in North Hudson said it was absurd for Negrin to be considered their spokesman. When they saw how he rocketed to public attention, they said the bomb must have been planted by Castro sympathizers in order

to build up Negrin's image as a leader in the English-language media.

Negrin had been referred to as "only token opposition" in news accounts when he ran for mayor in 1978.

However, at a news conference Tuesday, he was able to call his shots, charging local police with failing to protect him and the Rev. Andres Reyes, a fellow exile who negotiated with Castro.

Because of the bombings, Union City's 15-man detective bureau must deal with the high-powered cloak-and-dagger atmosphere of revolutions besides handling the normal accumulation of purse-snatchings, burglaries, tire-slashings and shoplifting.

Detective Capt. Wilbur Nelson said, "We're sitting on a powderkeg," while his men interviewed a friend of Negrin's. "We're going to be extremely careful, and we're doing our job."

The department already anticipated at least one bomb threat against Rev. Reyes' parish, Holy Family Church, and had searched a hall containing 300 people before the threatening call was made.

Negrin, meanwhile, sits in the hallway outside Nelson's office and complains he is not given protection.

But the danger he is in apparently doesn't deter him from discussing the "mafia" that is allegedly after him.

"I don't care about all the publicity," he continues. "I've got a job to do."



Eulalio Negrin
Says his enemies want to kill him

Cuban exiles deny bombings

By CAMILLE KENNY

Two Cuban exile groups held separate press conferences in Union City last night, one to deny FBI allegations that their members are involved with the anti-Castro terrorist group Omega 7 which claimed responsibility for Sunday night's bombings, the other to protest the sentencing of three Cubans last week.

The Cuban Nationalist Movement (CMN), in a meeting at their New York Ave. headquarters, challenged the FBI to prove allegations that their members were responsible for the bombings attributed to Omega 7.

The FBI announced Monday that they were looking for Virgilio Pablo Paz and Jose Dionisio Suarez, both of Union City, in connection with the three recent bombings and other terrorist activities. Both men are members of the CMN, according to spokesman Armando Santana.

"We have been in touch with our lawyers about the FBI's allegations, and we are going to take legal action," said Santana. "They have been making these allegations about our members since 1976, and they have no proof they (Paz and Suarez) are members of Omega 7."

Santana said that it was illogical for the FBI to believe Paz and Suarez set the bombs, since they were already being sought in connection with the murder of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier. "Anyone running from justice would not be setting bombs," said Santana.

At the other meeting, the Bloques Cubanos protested the sentencing of Guillermo Novo and Alvin Ross to double life terms Friday for the murder of Orlando Letelier.

The Bloques, which is an umbrella organization of several anti-Castro revolutionary groups, including the CMN, said the sentences are "unfair. It is a harassment of the Cuban community to intimidate our activities to liberate our country," said Roger Hernandez.

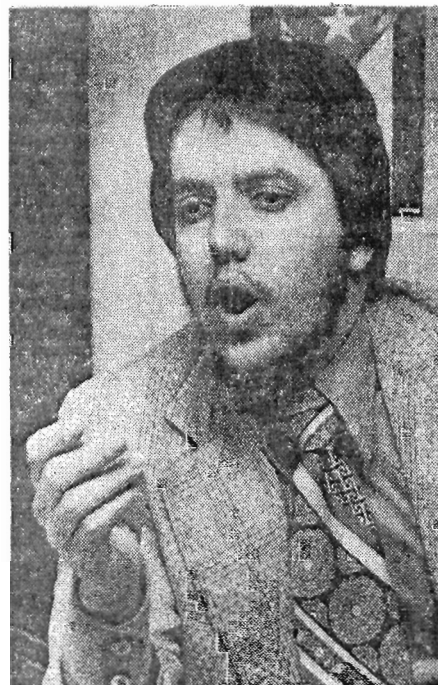
"The Novos and Ross are innocent, and we have faith in the democratic institutions of this country and trust they will be considered not guilty in their appeal to a superior court," Hernandez added. Hernandez attributed the recent bombings to "someone who feels that is the way to liberate Cuba, or perhaps Castro himself."

Letelier, who had been a member of the Marxist regime of Chilean president Salvador Allende, was killed, along with a co-worker, Ronni Moffitt of Passaic, when a remote-control bomb exploded under Letelier's car as he drove along Washington's Embassy Row.

Santana said the CMN supports the actions—including bombings—of any organization fighting to free Cuba from the government of Fidel Castro, "as long as no innocent people are hurt." Santana was arrested in 1976 and served two years in jail for the attempted bombing of the Academy of Music in New York City, where a rally celebrating the anniversary of Castro's access to power was scheduled.

He said the CMN has the support of the majority of Cubans in the area, but declined to say how many members the group has. "Those who know don't say, and those who say don't know," Santana said.

He also denounced Eulalio Negrin, whose community action program storefront was bombed Sunday night, saying that Negrin has been dealing with communist Cubans for several years.



Armando Sanchez
Cuban Nationalist Movement spokesman



Members of the Bloques Cubanos group met last night at the Spanish Mercantile Building at 4113 Palisades Ave. to denounce

the sentencing of the Novo brothers for murdering Chilean Ambassador Orlando Letelier

Dispatch Photo by Linda Catalfo