

5th Ave. Office of Soviet Airline Is Bombed

A masked man running down Fifth Avenue tossed a bomb into the office of Aeroflot, the Soviet airline, at 6:07 P.M. yesterday, blasting out the storefront's windows and cracking other windows across the street, according to the police. Three passers-by were slightly injured by glass splinters and were taken to St. Clare's Hospital.

A police officer guarding the airline's office was uninjured, the police said. He radioed for help, and officers who rushed to the scene took several suspects into custody to be presented in a lineup.

About a half hour after the explosion an anonymous caller to The Associated Press identified himself as a member of the Jewish Defense League and said the group had "planted the bomb at Aeroflot" to protest the imprisonment of Soviet dissidents.

Soon afterward, a caller to United Press International took responsibility on behalf of Omega 7, an anti-Castro group.

The blast ripped out the windows of the Aeroflot office at 545 Fifth Avenue, near 45th Street, strewn glass shards and metal debris across the sidewalk. It also shattered the glass storefront of a poster shop next door and cracked the windows of Qantas Airways and British Airways across the street. A large metal step that had been in front of the Aeroflot office was blown a several feet by the force of the explosion.

Kremlin Poster Is Torn

Furniture inside the Soviet airlines office did not appear severely damaged, but a poster of the Kremlin was torn down the center.

"I was walking 20 meters away and suddenly there was a very loud bang and I heard someone yelling, 'Help, help,'" said Jan Van Eyk, a visitor from the Netherlands.

Aeroflot, one of the most visible Soviet businesses in the city, has recently been the object of political protest over the Soviet military action in Afghanistan. On Friday, cargo handlers and ticket takers at Kennedy Airport refused to service an Aeroflot plane coming in from Moscow and the plane was diverted to Montreal.

The Jewish Defense League has taken responsibility for other anti-Soviet bombings here in the last few years, including most recently a smoke bomb that went off harmlessly at the end of a concert by the Moscow Pops Orchestra at Carnegie Hall on Nov. 19.

The Soviet Mission to the United Na-



United Press International

Police officers survey damage to building at Fifth Avenue and 45th Street

tions, on East 67th Street, was the target of a bombing on Dec. 11 that injured four police officers and at least two mission employees and shattered hundreds of

windows on the block. Omega 7 took responsibility for that explosion and one at the Cuban Mission at 38th Street and Lexington Avenue five days earlier.