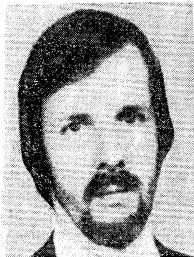


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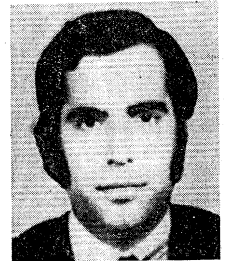
U.S. Threatening to Sever Chile Relations



JUAN WILLIAMS ROSE



U.S. authorities want to talk to two Chilean secret agents (left and right) about the September 1976 car explosion here which killed Orlando Letelier.



ALEJANDRO ROMERAL JARA

SANTIAGO PRESSURED TO COOPERATE IN PROBE OF LETELIER MURDER HERE

By Jeremiah O'Leary
Washington Star Staff Writer

The United States is prepared to sever diplomatic relations with Chile if the Santiago regime refuses to comply with Washington's formal request that it make available two alleged secret police agents for questioning about their roles in the bombings of former Ambassador Orlando Letelier and a companion.

An uncooperative attitude from Chile toward the U.S. request could result in the recall of Ambassador George Landau at the least and in a

rupture of diplomatic relations at worst, sources said.

Washington last week asked that the Chilean Supreme Court to question the two alleged agents of DINA, the secret police organization of the Santiago military regime. If Santiago does not comply, informed sources here said, the United States would retaliate within about 10 days.

The two Chileans are known to investigators here only by the false names they gave when their applications for diplomatic visas were received at the American consulate in

Santiago. They are said by officials to be members of the Chilean army and to have used the names "Juan Williams Rose" and "Alejandro Romeral Jara."

INVESTIGATORS believe that the two may have been the persons who put out the "contract" for the assassination of Letelier, an exiled supporter of the Marxist government of the late President Salvador Allende.

It is known that they two alleged agents came to the United States three times — in January, August

and October 1976 — using Chilean passports validated by the United States to certify that they were on official business.

Letelier and Ronni Moffitt were killed on Sept. 21, 1976, when a powerful bomb went off under the driver's seat of the car Letelier was driving at Sheridan Circle during rush hour.

Photographs of the two men, who are prime suspects in the alleged conspiracy to kill Letelier, were included in the formal U.S. request that was sent by the State Department

to Chile by diplomatic pouch and under seal.

The Star has obtained copies of the passport pictures used by "Williams" and "Romeral." Investigators have been using the pictures in Miami, New York and Washington in efforts to tie the two Chileans to anti-Castro Cuban exiles who are suspected of having carried out the actual bombing.

OFFICIAL SOURCES at the State and Justice Departments said they had nothing to add to the covering letter sent by Chief U.S. District

Judge William B. Bryant to the Chilean Supreme Court. Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugene Propper, who is handling the Letelier case, declined to comment. The FBI said only that the case is still very active but officials added no new details to the status of the probe.

Although administration officials remain tight-lipped about the details of the case developed by investigators, the new squeeze on Chile comes against a backdrop of steadily worsening relations in the past year.

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LETELIER

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tween the Carter administration and the rigid Pinochet government.

The Carter administration has been emphasizing the human rights performance of other nations and Chile has been condemned for its record as a rightist police state.

Officials in a position to know say the State Department has not given Chile an ultimatum in so many words, although informed sources said the situation amounts to that.

Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher called in Ambassador Jorge Cauas at the same time last week that Ambassador Landau was meeting with Foreign Minister Patricio Carvajal Prado in Santiago and it was made clear to the Chileans that Washington expected the Chilean court to comply with the request to question the alleged DINA agents under oath.

THE UNITED STATES also requested that Propper and FBI agents take part in the questioning of the men.

If the Chileans claim the men do not exist, or that their whereabouts is unknown, the United States is expected to call Landau home for consultation at the very least and might break diplomatic relations with Santiago. "It has been conveyed to Chile that we take a most serious view of this matter," said one insider. But he added he doubted that they had been



ORLANDO LETELIER

New clues on killing
told any specifics of what the U.S. reaction would be.

Another official said he believed there is no way the military government will make the two available for questioning by their own courts or by anyone from the Justice Department.

But, one official said, "they can hardly claim the men don't exist because we gave them visas and we have their pictures. Of course, they might just tell them to go get lost somewhere till this blows over or maybe someone will find the two of them dead in a barranca (ditch) out-side of town."

The potentially harsh U.S. reaction to a lack of cooperation by Santiago stems partly from the fact that the

United States no longer has a military or economic aid program which could be used as leverage to gain Chilean cooperation. Aid to Chile has been reduced to a trickle.

Cauas, the Chilean ambassador, will be replaced routinely at the end of this month by Ambassador Jose Miguel Barros, a career diplomat. The Chilean Embassy said the United States already has given its agreement for Barros to take over the Washington position.

OFFICIALS believe this is not a good time for Chile to lose contact with the United States. Argentina and Chile are involved in boundary disputes in the Beagle Channel at the Straits of Magellan and Argentina recently went on a war footing over the situation in Peru, which has powerful Soviet-supplied tank forces, there has been some talk in its armed forces about recovering land in the Atacama desert that Chile seized 100 years ago as spoils of the War of the Pacific.

"Williams" and "Romeral" are known to have visited Chilean Consul Hector Duran in Miami during their trips to the United States and investigators believe he put them in touch with anti-Castro exiles in southern Florida.

The belief of investigators is that "Williams," who investigators say is blond despite the appearance of his photo, met in New York with Guillermo Novo, another anti-Castro activist well known to the FBI and police. Novo is a fugitive from justice

and has not been seen for many months around Union City, N.J., where he used to live.

As the case is reconstructed by Propper, the Cuban exile members of the CORU gang were the "hit men" who probably planted the explosives that killed Letelier and Moffitt.

THE LETTER FROM Judge Bryant to the Chilean court did not spell this out but it is implied that "Williams" and "Romeral" put out the "contract" on the Chilean leftist leader.

Another of the New Jersey Cuban exiles, Jose Dioniso Suarez, has been in jail for nearly a year, serving a contempt sentence for refusing to answer Propper's questions before a U.S. grand jury here.

Suarez is due to be released on April 3, when the term of the grand jury expires. But officials point out that there is nothing to prevent the Justice Department from putting him before a new grand jury at once.

The major gaps in the U.S. case against the Cubans and the two DINA agents are that investigators, although able to connect the two groups, still lack enough evidence to go to trial on either the actual bombing or to seek indictments against whoever put out the murder contract.

There is no way Propper can get the two Chileans before the grand jury here and, without testimony, it cannot be established whether they acted on their own or on orders from Col. Manuel Contreras, former chief of DINA and a close associate of Pinochet.