

# Ship Seizure Foiled By U.S., Cubans Say

MIAMI March 1 (UPI)—The leader of a militant Cuban exile group angrily blamed the United States today for thwarting an attempt by raiders to capture the Cuban freighter that rammed its own life boat off Virginia Tuesday.

Customs agents seized a smallboat containing four men yesterday off Government Cut near a Coast Guard station. They were jailed on probable charges of attempting to illegally export arms.

Dr. Orlando Bosch, secretary general of the Insurreccional Movement of Revolutionary Recovery (MIRR), said the men were on a mission to attack the freighter 28th of July as it passed the Florida coast and free three would-be defectors who had been in the rammed life boat.

Bosch said the four men in the 15-foot boat carried a 20 mm. gun, an automatic rifle and hand grenades and were going to rendezvous with a 20-foot vessel carrying six men armed with "several 87 mm. cannons" and 50 caliber machine guns. When the smaller vessel didn't show up on time, Bosch said, the larger boat fled to escape possible capture by the Coast Guard.

(Havana Radio said yesterday the three "traitors" were taken from the sea alive and

were being returned to Cuba to stand trial. Witnesses to the drama off the Virginia coast believed, however, the men drowned after the lifeboat was rammed by the freighter.)

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## U.S. SENTENCES 'TIGER' OF CUBA

### Masterrer Gets Four Years for Plot

BY THEODORE A. EDGEE  
MIAMI, Fla. (AP)—Rolando Masterrer, the dreaded "Tiger" of pre-Castro Cuba, was sentenced today to four years in prison Wednesday in connection with a priest's plot to overthrow the government with a ragtag volunteer army.

Five members of Masterrer's invasion force were given lesser sentences by U.S. District Judge Ted Cabot.

Defense attorneys said all six defendants would appeal.

The defendants—three Cuban exiles, two Haitian exiles and an American—were among 74 men in battle dress nabbed by U.S. agents at a Florida Keys hide-out Jan. 2, 1967. The three army witnesses said in a trial before Judge Cabot last November, was ready to shove off by boat to invade Haiti in order to establish a base to proceed against Fidel Castro.

Masterrer, a senator in pre-Castro Cuba, received three years on a charge of conspiring to invade Haiti and another year on a count of conspiring to export arms to Haiti.

#### FREE ON BOND

The 50-year-old exile, who had been free on \$1,500 recognizance bond, was taken into custody with appeal bond set at \$2,000.

Masterrer commanded a private army of about 1,000 men during the "reign of terror" Fulgencio Batista, the deposed force, called "Los Tigres." The Tigres' move against the Castro elements, when Batista fled in 1958, Masterrer fled to Haiti.

Martin Casey, 30-year-old merchant seaman from Miami, was sentenced to nine months on each count with the sentences to run at the same time. Casey's appeal bond was set at \$1,000.

The Rev. Jean Baptiste Georges, Roman Catholic priest and former Haitian cabinet member who conceived the plot, received a 30-day jail term and suspended prison sentences of two years on each count. He was placed on three years probation. According to the charged plot, Father Georges was to have been made Haitian president replacing Francois Duvalier.

Defense attorney Gino Negretti told the court: "All he did was try to free the Haitian people from one of the worst tyrannies in history."

#### NO QUESTION

Judge Cabot replied: "His sincerity is not in question, but this

is the second time he has been charged with this crime." In 1964, charges against Father Georges were dismissed.

Cuban exiles Antonio Rojas and Julio Aton Constanza and Haitian exile Rene Leon, a former Army colonel and the father of seven living in Elmhurst, N.Y., were given 60 day jail sentences, one year suspended prison sentences, and two years probation.

Negretti moved unsuccessfully for a directed verdict of acquittal despite the jury conviction. He argued that on Oct. 1, 1962, joint resolutions of Congress expressing support for freedom of Cuba from Communist domination superseded the statute under which the defendants were convicted.

Judge Cabot ruled the constitution was an expression of policy rather than a law.

The six defendants sentenced one by one, stood silent as they heard their fate.

## Bomb-Toting Cuban Exile Arrested

TIFFON, Ga., April 14 (UPI)—A Cuban exile was arrested with a bomb-filled suitcase today as he prepared to board a rented plane, apparently bound on a raid against Cuba.

Authorities identified him as Barbaro Balan Garcia, 34, of Miami. He was taken before U.S. Commissioner Eugene Grenier in Valdosta and charged with violating the U.S. Neutrality Act by trying to export war materials from the United States.

Another man, identified as Arthur Gertel, 25, of Miami, was also arrested. He, authorities said, was to have flown the plane.

The arrests were made as two suitcases were being loaded on the plane. One suitcase contained dynamite and small aerial bombs and the other propaganda written in Spanish.

Garcia speaks no English, authorities said, and he was assigned an interpreter for the hearing before the U.S. commissioner.

## 7 Are Indicted In Haitian Invasion Plot

MIAMI, Fla., Feb. 27 (AP)—A former Cuban senator, an exiled Haitian priest and five other men were indicted today on charges of conspiring to invade Haiti from the Florida Keys last month.

Six of the seven were among 75 battle-clad exiles and American adventurers rounded up Jan. 2 when customs agents barged into their camp on a secluded island near Marathon. A small arsenal was confiscated.

The indictments were returned by a Federal grand jury in Miami.

The maximum penalty is five years in prison and \$10,000 fines.

The indictment said the seven conspired to set up a camp in southern Florida and to transport arms and ammunition to Miami from New York and Atlanta, Ga. The indictment said also they had planned to transport men and arms by boat for a military expedition against Haiti.

Named in the indictment are: Rolando Masterrer Rojas, 49, a Cuban citizen and former Cuban senator who now lives in Miami; Father Jean Baptiste Georges, 47, a Roman Catholic priest and former Minister of Education in Haiti, a Haitian citizen, living in Miami; Antonio Leon Rojas, 52, a Cuban, in Miami.

Also, Rene Juarez Leon, 32, a Haitian citizen living at Elmhurst, N.Y.; Julio Aton Constanza Palau, 30, a Cuban, Miami; Martin Francis Xavier Casey, 28, a U.S. citizen living in Miami; Mitchell Livingston Wer Bell, 34, 48, a U.S. citizen, living at Powder Springs, Ga.

## Cuban, Bombs Seized in Georgia

VALDOSTA, Ga. (AP)—A Cuban exile was arrested today with a suitcase packed with incendiary and other explosives, authorities said. He was charged with violating the U.S. Neutrality Act by attempting to export war materials.

He was arrested by U.S. customs agents yesterday shortly before takeoff in a small plane in which were cases of incendiary and aerial bombs and hand grenades, officials said.

Identified as Barbaro Balan Garcia of Miami, he was arrested by U.S. Customs Inspector Eugene Grenier, who set bond at \$1,000, which was not posted.

Grenier, granting a request by Customs Agent W. B. Lankford, ruled that Garcia not be allowed to sign any affidavits or other documents until he had been interviewed by the U.S. Attorney General's office.

With GARCIA at Tifton was another man, Arthur Gertel, who an agent said had a driver's license listing an Oryzland, Pa., address. He was not arrested.

Examining Officer of Tifton Air Service Inc. said he flew with Gertel on a routine check-out flight before papers were signed for the plane.

Agents arrested Francois Leon, 34, last month in Valdosta, Ga., when he was returning from Miami to Cuba. He said last month he was returning from Miami to Cuba.

GARCIA, who speaks no Spanish, refused to provide an interpreter through an interpreter. His court-appointed attorney, Omear Franklin, of Valdosta, contacted Franklin to try to get him to sign a paper committing him to return to Cuba.

He said last month he was returning from Miami to Cuba.

Introduced into evidence were maps of Cuba, one which agents said indicated a flight plan to Cuba, and the flight plan filed at Tifton for a trip to Miami, Ga.

Authorities in Valdosta said the two indictments were returned by a grand jury in Valdosta. The indictment included charges of conspiring to transport men and arms by boat for a military expedition against Haiti.