

Castro, Exiles Trade Charges in Ship Attack

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SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Fidel Castro's government and Cuban exiles are blaming each other for the machine-gunning of the Spanish freighter Sierra Aranzazu.

Three crewmen were killed and seven injured when two unidentified speedboats attacked the 1,600-ton ship Sunday night and set it afire off the eastern tip of Cuba.

A survivor said the boats swooped in moments after a speedboat approached the ship, turned on a spotlight on its name, and roared away.

Havana Radio said "there is reason to believe" that "pirates" financed by the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency made the attack.

The broadcast, monitored in Miami, was the first recognition of the incident by

the Castro government.

Quoting the Cuban armed forces ministry, the broadcast said, "the U. S. state department has said it has no knowledge about who made the attack. This statement is cynical.

"The U. S. government knows perfectly well who made the attack since the perpetrators are mercenary elements, equipped, paid and directed by the Central Intelligence Agency."

Two Cuban exile leaders — Manuel Artime and Manolo Ray — denied their men were involved. Friends of Artime in Panama said his organization believes the raid was carried out by Castro agents to discredit the exile group.

In Nassau, capital of the Bahamas, there was speculation among government circles that Castro gunboats may have fired on the Spanish ship. These circles suggested that Castro might want to create an incident he could exploit politically.

An anonymous telephone caller in Miami, Fla., said the attack was the work of a secret organization and added: "This is the beginning of attacks on any ship that trades with Cuba."