

U.S. to Question Terrorist In Chile Refugee Killing

Washington

The Venezuelan government has agreed to permit U.S. investigators to question a Cuban-exile terrorist now in a Caracas jail about the assassination in Washington of former Chilean cabinet member Orlando Letelier, according to sources familiar with the investigation.

The sources said the Cuban, Dr. Orlando Bosch, is not himself a suspect in the killing. But these sources said the Justice Department has determined that Bosch probably knows who murdered Letelier and why.

A federal prosecutor and an FBI agent plan to go to Caracas early next month to interrogate Bosch, a pediatrician turned anti-Castro militant, who is considered a leader of an increasingly violent group of Cuban exiles.

The sources said the Justice Department believes Bosch can corroborate evidence, already obtained, which seems to point to an international murder-for-hire plot in which Cuban exiles did the actual killing.

Federal investigators, according to the sources, have developed information indicating that the Cubans were hired by an official of the military government of Chile who traveled to the United States under an assumed name to arrange for the murder.

The sources refused to identify the Chilean except to say that he was closely connected with that country's intelligence agency and had close ties to

an extreme political group once partially financed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

It could not be learned whether the Justice Department believes the Chilean official acted on his own or was operating on the instructions of the government of President Augusto Pinochet.

Sources said the Justice Department last week briefed at least one member of Congress.

Letelier, 44, who served both as foreign minister and defense minister in the government of President Salvador Allende, was killed September 21 when a bomb exploded in his automobile as he was driving on Washington's Embassy Row.

Also killed in the blast of military-style C-4 plastic explosives was Ronni K. Moffitt, 25, a colleague of Letelier's at the Institute for Policy Studies, a left-leaning "think tank" where Letelier worked following his release from prison in Chile in 1974. Letelier was imprisoned for a year after the military coup that toppled the Allende government on September 11, 1973.

Letelier was an outspoken critic of the Pinochet government in both the United States and Europe. Shortly before he was killed, the military government officially revoked his Chilean citizenship.