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Cubans

23 May 67

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MIAMI, Fla. AP --A Castro bomb squad blew up an office in "Little Havana" Tuesday, exiles charged, as thousands of Cuban refugees walked off their jobs to protest the jailing of militant anti-Castro leader Felipe Rivero.

In addition, several hundred Cubans, mostly women dressed in black and carrying "Free Rivero" signs, staged a peaceful march in downtown Miami.

The "terrorist" blast at the headquarters of a Cuban unit group didn't hurt anyone--it went off before daylight--but the one-day strike affected a reported 1,000 businesses. It also cut into school attendance.

Strike leaders claimed 40,000 of the city's 100,000 exiles took part in the sympathy movement. Idle Cubans--in a holiday spirit--jammed the exile colony in the heart of Miami during the hot day.

In the afternoon, the marchers strolled quietly to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Torch of Friendship.

Hundreds of others, preferring not to walk the three miles under the hot sun, rode along side the marchers in cars adorned with Cuban flags.

A woman carrying a cross led the parade. Among placards carried by marchers was: "While Americans Die in Vietnam, America Protects Fidel." Another sign said, "Cubans Have a Right to Fight."

The parade, at the start of Miami's rush hour, tied up traffic for blocks. At one point, 12 buses were lined up waiting for clearance.

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Cuban Strike Bjt NL 400

MIAMI, Fla. AP --A Castro bomb squad blew up an office in "LITTLE Havana" Tuesday, exiles charged, as thousands of Cuban refugees walked off their jobs to protest the jailing of militant anti-Castro leader Felipe Rivero.

The "terrorist" blast at the headquarters of a Cuban unity group didn't hurt anyone--it went off before daylight--but the one-day strike affected a reported 1,000 businesses and cut into school attendance.

Strike leaders claimed 40,000 exiles took part in the sympathy movement. Hundreds of women and children, they said, planned to march later down Biscayne Boulevard.

Hundreds of idle Cubans jammed the exile colony in the heart of Miami, where a holiday spirit prevailed. Although Cuban

restaurants and bars were closed, American bars did a brisk business.

The dashing, 48-year-old Rivero was arrested May 12 after he threatened to blow up the Cuban pavilion at Expo 67, the Canadian fair. He has claimed to have had a hand in several anti-Castro expeditions and faces a deportation hearing next Monday.

A State Department spokesman said the strike would have no effect on the U.S. case against Rivero, now hospitalized on the eighth day of a hunger strike.

"The situation will follow due process of law and today's events will not affect anything," the spokesman said. "His case will come up as scheduled."

Police said FBI agents searched the bombed out office of the Cuban Exile Representation RECE and studied the explosive, six sticks of dynamite and a timing device. Witnesses told of seeing four men, believed Cuban, fleeing the building shortly before the blast.

RECE leaders claimed the bombing was the work of "Castroist terrorism" in an effort to split anti-Castro elements in the exile colony.

Dr. Ernesto Freyre, head of RECE, said his group, formed in 1964 to speak for all Cuban exiles, sympathized with Rivero but felt the strike was an improper method of protest.

Predictions by strike leaders that the walkout would spread to other areas of the country with large exile populations were not borne out immediately. But they claimed to have closed down all Cuban businesses in Miami.

School officials said attendance in classes with high Cuban enrollments was down about 10 per cent.

At the headquarters of the Bay of Pigs Veterans Association, one sponsor of the strike, Juan Torres Mena, 39, and 15 other persons continued their fasts as part of the protest. Three of the Cubans, including Torres Mena, were hospitalized for a time.

Rivero was captured during the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 and later was released with other prisoners in an exchange for tractors. He became famous among the exiles when he duped his captors into thinking he had been brainwashed and then denounced Communism and Castro on a Havana television broadcast.

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