

By Trin Yarborough
and Max Weisenfeld

WASHINGTON

PROFESSIONAL KILLER MICHAEL VERNON TOWNLEY remained impassive in the witness stand as his Cuban exile confederates in the car bomb murder of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt hurled epithets at him for having confessed.

"Traitor," "whore," "shithead" were among the names tossed in Spanish by Townley's co-defendants in the murder trial that opened in U.S. District Court here last week amid great security precautions and anger on both sides. The wife of one of the co-defendants was heard to say, "Cut out his tongue."

The courtroom is crowded. Bomb squad dogs have checked the entire courthouse. Persons attending the trial must pass through two thorough checks by metal detectors and be searched by U.S. marshals before being allowed into the courtroom. Both the judge and prosecutor have received anonymous threats.

Over 150 journalists from all over the world have applied to cover the trial, but only 40 have been granted passes. The spectators are a mixture of relatives and supporters of the Cuban exiles and co-workers and friends of Letelier and Moffitt from the Institute for Policy Studies where both worked.

On trial are Cuban Nationalist Movement leader, Cuban exile Guillermo Novo, his brother, Ignacio, and another Cuban exile, Alvin Ross. Virgil Paz and Dionisio Suarez, two other Cuban exiles charged with the murders, are still at large, and three top DINA officials, also charged, are awaiting the outcome of secret extradition proceedings in Chile.

Townley testifies.

Townley testified Thursday that he was ordered by high officials in the Chilean secret police, DINA, to kill Chilean exile leader Letelier with the help of members of the CNM. He described in minute detail the planning and execution of the murder.

Federal prosecutors said they will prove that the Chilean secret police not only arranged the murder of Letelier but also ordered the murder of exile leader Carlos Altamirano.

In opening statements to an all-black jury of seven women and five men, the prosecutors claimed that DINA sent one of its agents, Townley, to recruit help for the Altamirano slaying from members of the U.S.-based CNM.

Defense attorneys for three Cubans now on trial referred to the bombing in their opening remarks as "monstrous, horrible...committed by the most evil people."

"But neither the DINA nor the Cuban Nationalist Movement had anything to do with it," said defense attorney Paul Goldberger. "This crime was committed by a hired killer, Michael Vernon Townley, who was the agent of the American CIA."

The CIA has filed affidavits stating that Townley contacted them in Miami three times, but apparently nothing ever came of it. Townley denied ever having worked—having taken money or assignments—for the CIA. Sources at the Institute for Policy Studies repeated their belief that the Chilean government ordered the murders.

Links to other crimes.

Chief prosecutor, Assistant U.S. District Attorney Eugene Propper, told the jury that the link between DINA and the Cuban exile terrorist movement could be found in other crimes, including the assassination plan for Altamirano.

He said that Townley had been sent by DINA in 1975 to meet with CNM leaders in New Jersey to seek their help in murdering Altamirano. Townley, an American who lived most of his life in Chile, is the government's chief prosecution witness and has already pleaded guilty to the murders.

Propper said that, with the help of the Cuban exiles, Townley bought explosives and electronic devices and lined up Cuban assistants for a murder mission to Mexico to kill Altamirano at a Chilean exile meeting where he was a speaker.

But the plan was thwarted when Town-

LETELIER MURDER TRIAL

Defendants charge Townley and CIA with evil bombing



The car in which Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt were riding when they were murdered.

Townley denies CIA connection; testifies about details of Letelier-Moffitt murder

ley took longer than expected to gain the trust of the Cubans, and to buy the needed murder materials—TNT, a telephone paging device which Townley modified into a remote bomb detonator, and electric matches for bomb fuses.

Townley then went to Miami where he recruited Virgil Paz, one of the two Cuban exiles still sought for the Letelier-Moffitt murders, to help him assassinate Altamirano. But when the death team arrived in Mexico, the Chilean meeting had already ended.

The Altamirano murder scheme and the murders of Letelier-Moffitt are, according to government and other sources,

only two of many assassination plans—some successful, some not—participated in jointly by DINA and Cuban exiles.

Cubans insist on DINA help.

In the assassination of Letelier, said prosecutor Propper, the Cubans insisted that DINA remain involved in the murder, through Townley, and insisted that Townley plant the bomb in Letelier's car. When the investigation of the murders began to focus on the Cubans, Propper told the jury, they contacted Townley to arrange a loan of \$25,000 so that they could leave the U.S., but were turned down by the Chilean government.

AFL-CIO, Inter-American group postpone Chile boycott

Organizers of a consumer boycott of imported goods from Chile were "greatly disappointed" by a decision made last week by the AFL-CIO and ORIT—the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers—to postpone for at least six weeks the start of the proposed boycott of handling any products from Chile.

Several Latin American representatives at the Washington meeting were reported "furious" at the delay. The AFL-CIO apparently wants to await results of discussions between some Chilean unionists—known as the Group of Ten—and the Pinochet regime. In late December, Pinochet appointed a new labor minister, Jose Pinero, who promised in early January to restore some union rights.

Many supporters of democratic rights in Chile think it is hopeless to negotiate with Pinochet, even if it is worth pressuring the regime for liberalization. Pinochet's modest concessions to trade unionists may have been made in response to pressure from Peter Grace, president of R.W. Grace shipping lines and president as well of the American Institute for Free Labor Development, who recently visited Chile. AIFLD, which numbers AFL-CIO president George Meany among its directors, has a notorious his-

tory in Latin America for intervention in favor of conservative, pro-capitalist unions.

The delay in implementing the boycott came at a particularly inopportune time, according to Susan Borenstein, executive director of the National Chile Center, which has been mounting a consumer boycott of Chilean wines and fruits, such as grapes, peaches, grapefruit and plums. This is the peak season for importation of Chilean fruits and the time when a labor boycott would have had the greatest effect.

The fruit and food boycott would strike a direct blow at the "shock treatment" policies of the Pinochet regime inspired by U.S. conservative economist Milton Friedman. Chilean economic policy now emphasizes maximizing exports to earn foreign exchange, even though that means driving up the prices for food in Chile. Although food now makes up roughly 10 percent of Chilean exports, according to boycott supporters, under the Salvador Allende government almost no food was exported and food was even imported to meet domestic needs. The result in Chile now is growing malnutrition and a further squeeze on declining workers' incomes.

—David Mohr

Some of the unused bomb parts for the Altamirano assassination were later recovered in an apartment in New Jersey, rented by the defendant Ross under an alias, Propper charged.

The prosecutors outlined frequent contact between Cuban exiles and high Chilean officials, including Chilean president Augusto Pinochet, and said the Cuban Nationalists hoped the Chilean government would recognize them as the official Cuban government in exile and allow them to open government offices in Santiago.

One government investigator told **IN THESE TIMES** that Pinochet is responsible not only for the Letelier murder and the Altamirano assassination attempt, but also for the assassination of Chilean general Carlos Prats, and that Pinochet "ordered the murders" of Bernardo Leighton, Gabriel Valdes, Andres Pascal Allende and others.

Letelier letters.

U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker, who had ruled against a defense motion to admit the materials found in Letelier's briefcase at the bombing site, Wednesday seemed to be reconsidering this decision. He appointed a team to do new translations of four letters: one from ousted Marxist Chilean president Salvador Allende to Letelier; one from Letelier to Allende's daughter, Tati; one from Letelier to Cuban foreign minister Raul Roa; and one to Letelier from a German branch of Letelier's political party, Unidad Popular.

Prosecutors have attempted to establish the motive of a Chilean government for Letelier's assassination. Among the witnesses so far have been Sen. George McGovern (D-SD), who testified that Letelier "sensitized" him to the issue of Chilean human rights violations.

He also said that Letelier had lobbied vigorously in the Congress for passage of legislation that would cut in half the \$50 million in U.S. economic aid to Chile unless that country changed its oppressive policies.

Dutch congressman, Relus ter Beek, Labor Party member of the second chamber of the Dutch Parliament, testified that Letelier's meetings with various Dutch leaders helped to convince a Dutch company, the Stevin Group, to cancel a multi-million dollar investment in Chile.

Michael Moffitt, Ronni Moffitt's husband, who was riding to work at the Institute for Policy Studies with his wife and Letelier when the car bomb exploded, testified that he tried to free Letelier from the car wreckage. He then saw that Letelier's legs had been blown away. A few minutes later, he saw his wife, whom he had first thought unhurt when she stumbled away from the car, bleeding to death from the mouth. Moffitt himself was injured only slightly.

Letelier death threats.

Moffitt also testified that Letelier had told him that a Chilean military officer had warned him, as he was being sent into exile after a year in concentration camp, that "Gen. Pinochet does not, and will not, tolerate activities against his government." The night before Letelier was slain, Moffitt testified, he had received a letter from a Chilean informant warning of threats against his life.

During her testimony, Isabel Letelier, Orlando's widow, wore a necklace containing a stone from Dawson Island concentration camp on which her husband had carved her nickname, Isa, during his imprisonment there.

She told of making an appointment with her husband on the morning of his murder to meet him for lunch and, half an hour later, receiving a call from his assistant to come to the hospital because "there's been a horrible accident."

"When I got to the hospital, I saw many people who worked at the Institute. I saw in their faces that something terrible had happened."

Mrs. Letelier also testified that her husband had traveled widely speaking about "the violations of human rights in Chile and the poor people in Chile who were starving."

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SMOKING

SURGEON GENERAL: IF YOU SMOKE MORE YOU DIE YOUNGER

By Ellen Goldensohn

IF THERE ARE ANY LINGERING doubts about whether smoking is directly linked to lung cancer and heart disease, they should be dispelled by the 1979 Surgeon General's Report. According to its findings, America's 54 million smokers are daily increasing their risk of premature and often particularly unpleasant deaths.

Smoking and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General was officially released on Jan. 11, the same date the first Surgeon General's Report on smoking appeared in 1964. In choosing to emphasize this 15th anniversary, HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano was undoubtedly attempting to increase the impact of this 1200-page document.

The sheer bulk of this report is meant to, and does, impress. It is a compendium of more than 30,000 papers studying the health consequences and behavioral aspects of smoking, possibilities for prevention and methods to curb the habit. In his introduction to the volume, Surgeon General Dr. Julius Richmond describes the report's contents as presenting "overwhelming evidence" that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer and heart disease and a formidable number of other diseases, and cites smoking as the "single most important environmental factor contributing to premature mortality."

Among other things, the 1979 report

- Piles up evidence to reaffirm the conclusion of its 1964 predecessor that smoking is a cause of lung cancer;

- Establishes a causal connection between smoking and emphysema;

- Goes beyond the 1964 study in definitively pointing to smoking as a key cause of heart and artery diseases;

- Adds urinary bladder cancer, cancer of the esophagus, cancer of the pancreas and cancer of the larynx to the list of diseases caused by or strongly connected to the smoking habit;

- Confirms that smokers' general mortality rates are higher (in men, by 70 percent) than the non-smoking population and that their life expectancies are significantly shorter than for non-smokers (a 30-year-old who smokes two packs a day loses 8.1 years of life);

- Shows that smokers who work in certain industries (such as asbestos, rubber, chemicals, uranium and textiles) can run up to 90 times greater risk of developing lung cancer than their non-smoking counterparts;

- Links smoking in expectant mothers to low birthweight infants, more frequent miscarriages and the birth of children with "measurable deficiencies in growth and development."

Although the tobacco industry made no attempt directly to refute the evidence presented in the report, a spokesperson for the Tobacco Institute, an industry association, called the data "not so much research as re-hash." And, in fact, the Surgeon General's office—with a five-fold increase in supporting data—came to pretty much the same conclusions as were found 15 years ago.

The tobacco industry is fond of saying that the links between smoking and cancer are "only statistical, not causal," but a

reading of the current report makes this claim seem a murderous evasion. Although the first causes of the many cancers are not yet known, the Surgeon General's Report clearly shows that smoking directly promotes the development of a variety of cancers and several other diseases.

The report's conclusion that there is a causal link between smoking and many specific diseases is not based simply on evidence that smokers have a greater chance than non-smokers of contracting those diseases and dying from them. Time and time again, the studies also show that for many of the cancers, cardiovascular diseases and for emphysema, the link with smoking is strongly "dose-related"—that is, the rates of illness and death rise in direct correlation to the number of cigarettes smoked, the duration of the smoking habit and degree of inhalation.

Conversely, stopping smoking is consistently associated in the studies with decreased risk of sickness and death from the same diseases. This dose-related evidence clearly singles out smoking as an independent disease-promoting factor, not a coincidental correlate. To get a hint of the breadth of some of the studies, the 41 tables of mortality rates in Chapter One of the report include eight major long-term follow-up studies of smoking, ranging in size from a British survey of 40,000 doctors to an American Cancer Society project that followed more than one million people in 25 states. All these studies unambiguously point up the relation between smoking and excess mortality.

In reviewing the nation's overall smoking habits of the last 15 years, the Surgeon General's Report revealed some bright spots. Thirty million people have given up smoking since 1964, and the percentage of adult smokers in January 1979 is lower than it has been at any time since the government began measuring smoking rates about 25 years ago. Given what Secretary Califano termed the "intense difficulty of quitting" and the "relentless efforts of the cigarette manufacturers to promote smoking," the drop in adult smoking is remarkable.

However, in spite of the apparent positive response among some groups of adults to the warnings against cigarettes, smoking among the young—particularly women and girls—has dramatically increased. (Between 1968 and 1974, the number of girls between the ages of 12 and 14 who smoked increased eightfold). Although smoking in adult women has fallen off slightly, those who do smoke as much as men have comparable dose-related mortality. Smoking-related death rates among women have increased to the extent that lung cancer is now the third most frequent cause of death among women. In the words of the report: "Women who smoke like men die like men who smoke."

Blacks are also particularly at risk. A greater proportion of blacks smoke than do whites and their lung cancer rates are higher.

In sum, the Surgeon General's Report contains a lot of old, bad news and a good deal of new bad news.

Secretary Califano expects that the mere publication of the 1979 report will have positive effects on health. In his

preface to the document, he writes, "Every time government and voluntary agencies have intensified efforts to spotlight risks, more smokers have given up" the habit. Clearly, mere information does make a big difference in getting some groups of people to stop smoking, but it doesn't do nearly enough to prevent the very young from embarking on the habit.

To this end the Secretary has announced that his campaign against smoking, launched a year ago, will receive an unspecified increase in funds earmarked for programs to convince children not to take up smoking. Other components of the campaign include more anti-smoking spots on television and efforts to restrict smoking in public buildings.

The War Against Smoking seems primarily a war of persuasion, and some of Califano's victories may be cancelled out by conflicting policies in the other branches of the federal government. President Carter has made no comment on the Surgeon General's Report and has gone to some trouble to reassure tobacco farmers that government will continue to subsidize them for growing that crop. Congress has never moved to bring tobacco under federal regulation as a drug, and as a token of its commitment to tobacco interests, has not raised the excise tax on a pack of cigarettes since 1951. In terms of influence, the voluntary organizations (such as the Lung Association and Cancer Society), which comprise a great proportion of the anti-smoking forces, are at a disadvantage since they cannot lobby without forfeiting their non-profit status with IRS. Meanwhile, the tobacco

lobbyists in Washington have a \$5 million yearly budget with which to pursue the industry's interests.

DHEW and Califano are doing their own thing, but there is no sign of government intention to attack the smoking problem on the behalf of the public. While several European and Scandinavian countries (among them Italy, Norway and Finland) have banned cigarette advertising altogether, such an explicit intervention seems unthinkable here at present. Not only is the government fragmented, on the issue of smoking, but the health establishment has also not organized itself to push for a major anti-smoking campaign. Preoccupied with intervening in acute stages of disease, the health professionals express minimal interest in health promotion activities.

If no concerted effort is made for a campaign on smoking to reach beyond HEW, the main effect of the new Surgeon General's Report will be to throw responsibility on the individual smoker.

The Report cites evidence of a health problem of staggering and tragic proportions—one-third of the nation's adult population and hundreds of thousands of its children are addicted to a potentially lethal drug. Many will give up smoking on the basis of the Surgeon General's findings, but the vast majority will not. Young people especially are likely to be more influenced by social acceptance of smoking than by the delayed threat of disability and death. The Surgeon General's report alone can do little to stop the creation of another generation of smokers. ■

SEVEN COMPANIES CONTROL MOST OF WORLD'S SMOKES

By Bruce Vandervort

G E N E V A

THE ANTI-TRUST ACTION THAT broke up Standard Oil in 1911 also dismantled a firm called the American Tobacco Company. By the time the trust busters got to the ATC, it had just about cornered the entire American tobacco market and, in collusion with the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain, was on its way to big things on the world market. The ATC is no more, but the monopolistic practices it represented have survived in other, more subtle forms. In fact, the tobacco industry, one of the world's earliest and most formidable monopolies, is today its most nearly perfect oligopoly.

A study just released by the United Nations states that seven multinational companies now account either directly or through licensing arrangements for about 90 percent of global tobacco manufacturing. In 1975, that included some 3.4 trillion cigarettes; of which 651.2 billion were turned out in the U.S. This is big business: in 1976, tobacco's Seven Sisters grossed about \$32 billion.

Four of the seven market leaders are American: Philip Morris (Marlboro), R.J. Reynolds (Winston), American Brands (Benson & Hedges) and Gulf and Western (Monte Cristo cigars). Two are British-based: British-American Tobacco (BAT) (Kent) and Imperial Tobacco (Players). The final member of the group is the South African conglomerate Rupert/Rembrandt, which just increased its share of the American market by acquiring Lig-

gett & Myers (L&M). Formerly, the company was perhaps best known in America for its Dunhill and Rothmans cigarettes.

Chain stores and beer.

Though these transnationals still rely on tobacco for the hard core of their cash flow, all have diversified widely in recent years. Some, as we shall see, have moved into closely related sectors (paper is a good example) in a drive to achieve vertical linkage in their tobacco operations. Others have ventured far afield, into beverages, snack foods and toiletries, for example.

Many commentators see this trend as a response to the cancer scare and anti-smoking initiatives like Proposition 5 in California last year. However, the reasons given by R.J. Reynolds in 1975 may be equally important: "First, having captured one-third of the U.S. cigarette market, the company could see a point of diminishing returns for growth potential. Second, significant cash was being generated which could be invested advantageously elsewhere."

Reynolds has probably sunk more of its huge cash flow (1976 net income: \$353 million) into diversification than any other tobacco multinational. Some of its earliest non-tobacco purchases—the Sea-Land container shipping line, Reynolds Aluminum—were aimed at reducing dependence on outside suppliers. More recent acquisitions have less direct connection to the tobacco business. Thus, Reynolds has become a sizeable oil producer and refiner, through take-overs of Aminoil and the American holdings of Burmah Oil, and a major food agribusiness concern, with its acquisition of Del Monte