

Indictment Of Puerto Ricans Near; Victims Are Recovering



LOLITA LEBRON . . . the FBI declined comment.

By WILLIAM F. ARBOGAST
WASHINGTON — Officially moved today toward swift indictment of four Puerto Rican fanatics who shot and wounded five congressmen in a wild affray Monday. At the same time Capitol Hill pondered new security proposals.

Congressional leaders were generally agreed, although unofficially, that no airtight precautions can be devised.

The five house members felled by the fusillade from the visitors' gallery apparently were recovering, although one of them, Rep. Alvin M. Bentley (R-Mich.), remained in critical condition. A bullet pierced his lung, stomach and liver.

Dr. George Crile, a specialist who flew here from Cleveland to examine the 35-year-old congressman, gave him a better than even chance to recover.

U.S. Dist. Atty. Leo Rover arranged to present the cases of the four Puerto Ricans to a federal grand jury today, estimating it would require no more than a day.

Oddy, Rover, then a practicing attorney here, was assigned by the court to defend Oscar Collazo when he and another Puerto Rican Nationalist tried to assassinate former President Truman in 1950. Collazo was sentenced to die, but Truman later commuted the sentence to life.

The four involved in Monday's incident are charged with assault with intent to kill. There are charges for each of the five House members shot down, making the maximum penalty upon conviction 75 years in prison—15 years on each count.

FOUR HELD
These held are Mrs. Lolita Lebron, 34-year-old divorcee and acknowledged leader of the quartet; Rafael C. Miranda, 25; Andres F. Cordero, 27; and Irving Flores Rodriguez, 28, all of New York City.

Their avowed purpose in invading the House with pistols and shooting wildly was to call attention to the Nationalist campaign for Puerto Rican independence—a cause which Puerto Ricans have rejected at the polls several times.

Julio Pinto Gnadia, head of the New York wing of the Nationalist party, referred to the four as "patriots" in a statement issued there, and he added: "We shall do all in our power to aid and defend our four compatriots in their hour of trial."

But Gov. Luis Munoz Marin of Puerto Rico flew here hurriedly and told President Eisenhower all Puerto Ricans protest "this outrage." He told newsmen he had no proof Communists were involved but that "the behavior of these people" indicated a possibility of Communist activity.

In New York, Mrs. Lebron's employer, Harold Werner, said FBI agents had asked his aid in keeping a watch on the woman.

"Just last week," he said, "two FBI agents visited me to warn me that Mrs. Lebron was under close surveillance because of her activities as a suspected Communist."

They told me she had been watched for a long time by the FBI.

FBI officials declined comment. Chicago FBI chief Guy Bannister said Mrs. Lebron's brother, Gonzalo Lebron, 20, is under surveillance. He added there is no evidence that he had any connection with the shooting. The Sun-Times quoted Lebron as saying with the problem of tighter security he fears "FBI arrest at any moment."

Now Congressmen May Change Minds About Using Bullet-Proof Glass

By DREW PEARSON
WASHINGTON — The spectacular gun-spraying of Congress by three Puerto Rican fanatics would never have happened if economy-minded Congressmen had taken the advice of the professional security officers.

Ever since July, 1947, when a disgruntled ex-capitol cop took a couple of potshots at Ohio's GOP Sen. John Bricker, professional security officers have urged the installation of bulletproof glass in front of the Senate and House galleries. They also recommended revamping the capitol police force to eliminate many of the inexperienced old men and young college students who hold patronage jobs as guards.

These proposals were pressed privately by plain-clothes men Mike Dowd and Carl Champ, both metropolitan police captains who are detailed on Capitol Hill. Capitol police chief William Broderick, a veteran law-enforcement officer, has also advocated the bulletproof glass.

The repealed privately to the Capitol Housekeeping Committee

that it is impossible to "frisk" every visitor to the galleries for concealed weapons, that it would be a simple matter for a fanatic to toss an old shoebox containing a bomb onto the floor of the Senate or House.

In the interest of economy, Senators and Congressmen rejected the bulletproof glass. When Broderick came in as police chief, however, they gave him more leeway in selecting his own men for the capitol police force.

It isn't generally known, but the Secret Service sends the capitol police a complete description of every crackpot who writes a threatening letter to the President or any other government official.

After Monday's shooting, Government security officers threw a special guard around Secretary of Interior McKay, who is personally in charge of Puerto Rican matters. For years, Puerto Rican Gov. Luis Munoz-Marin has been so careful of Puerto Rican fanatics that he takes a special bodyguard wherever he goes, changes hotels every day, and registers under an assumed name.

Hugh Alexander To Run Again

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic Rep. Hugh Q. Alexander of the 8th District of North Carolina today announced he will seek nomination for a second term in Congress in the May 29 state primary.

Rep. Alexander, a Kannapolis native, succeeded Rep. Robert L. (Farmer Bob) Doughton, veteran of 43 years in Congress, who retired.

In the 1952 election, Alexander noosed out his Republican opponent, Walter F. Johnson of Sparta, by less than 4,000 votes.

The 8th District is composed of Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Fredell, Rowan, Stanly, and Watauga counties.

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Financial Report in Brief

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Gain of \$133,104,704 in one year	
ASSETS	\$94,205,212
Increase of \$14,335,572 over 1952	
PAID POLICYHOLDERS AND BENEFICIARIES	\$10,541,464
LIABILITIES	\$81,770,341
Liabilities include policy reserves	
SURPLUS FUNDS AND CAPITAL	\$12,434,871



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2 Sets Foam Rubber Topper. Reg. 49.50 ----- SALE 33.00	2 Sets Only — Tuftless. Reg. 139.00 Sets ----- SALE 70.00 Set

THE GREATER CHARLOTTE PREACHING MISSION
THU. March 4
COMMUNITY-WIDE PREACHING SERVICES
Each Evening at 7:30, First Methodist Church.
NOONDAY COMMUNITY-WIDE PREACHING SERVICES — 12:30-1:15, First Baptist Church.
AFTERNOON COMMUNITY-WIDE BIBLE STUDY 2:30-3:30, Covenant Presbyterian Church.

