1-31-1992

Panama-america Publishing Company (epasa) Facilities Damaged By Fire

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen

Recommended Citation

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen/6989
Panama-america Publishing Company (epasa) Facilities Damaged By Fire

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, January 31, 1992

On Jan. 25, police spokespersons reported that unidentified persons tossed a bomb into offices of the Panama-America Publishing Company (EPASA). A fire caused by the explosions caused serious damage to administrative offices, but no casualties were reported. The company prints daily newspapers Panama-America and Critica Libre. EPASA employs about 150 administrators, journalists and typesetters. Combined nationwide circulation of the two dailies is about 80,000. EPASA president Rosario Arias de Galindo asserted that the attack was a response to the two newspapers' critical positions on national issues. He said, "This act is a clear example of terrorism against the freedom of expression." Vice President Ricardo Arias and Attorney General Rogelio Cruz attributed the bombing to followers of deposed Gen. Manuel Noriega. Cruz said that democracy in Panama "is hanging by a thread." On Jan. 27, deputy attorney general Rogelio Arosemena told reporters that results of a police investigation indicated the fire was not caused by an explosive device. According to Arosemena, initial police reports could have been a product of "generalized psychosis among the population," result of the wave of bomb threats and explosions during the month of January. EPASA is currently involved in a dispute with President Guillermo Endara's government concerning repayment of a US$1 million loan from the state-run Banco Nacional. The loan was contracted after the publisher was expropriated by the military-dominated government which took power in 1968. Subsequent to the US invasion in 1989, EPASA was returned to the former owners who have refused loan repayment. (Basic data from Agence France-Presse, ACAN-EFE, 01/25-27/92; Associated Press, 01/26/92)

-- End --