

# Letelier murder convicts to file appeal in month

By CAMILLE KENNY

The convictions of three North Hudson Cuban exiles convicted of participating in the murder of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier will be appealed next month, their attorney said.

Paul Goldberger of the New York City firm of Goldberger, Feldman and Dubin expects the appeal will be won, he said, because the trial judge refused to allow him complete cross-examination of the government's chief witness, Michael Townley.

Townley is an American ex-patriate who as an agent of DINA, the Chilean secret police, masterminded the plot to murder Letelier. The latter, Chile's ambassador to the U.S. under the Marxist government of Salvatore Allende, was killed in 1976 along with aide Ronni Moffit, formerly of Passaic, when a bomb exploded in their car in Washington, D.C.

Guillermo Novo and Alvin Ross Diaz of Union City were sentenced last March to double life prison terms for conspiracy. Ignacio Novo, Guillermo's brother, was convicted of a lesser role and sentenced to eight to 10 years imprisonment.

"I'm pessimistic by nature, especially about appeals, but we have a very good chance to win this one," said Goldberger. "The record is replete with error."

Goldberger said he was not permitted to cross-examine Townley about any of his activities other than those related to Letelier's murder. He said he is gather-

ing evidence that Townley was also an agent of the CIA.

Goldberger will file the appeal in the Washington, D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, and if it is granted, he will ask for a change of venue for the next trial.

"I wouldn't be happy about trying it in Washington again," said Goldberger. "It's a circus down there, since that is where the bombing occurred."

Goldberger said he has received only about one-third of his \$100,000 fee for defending the Novos and Ross, and nothing for writing the appeal, but considers it his "contribution to society."

"I'm doing it not necessarily because I believe they're innocent, but because the government's case is a lie," he said. "I also happen to be very fond of Bill Novo, and I'm not going to leave him stranded with a double life sentence."

Novo was formerly president of the Cuban Nationalist Movement located in Union City, and some of Goldberger's fee came from private contributions solicited in the organization's newspaper, *El Nacionalista*.

The government will have 30 days to respond to Goldberger's appeal brief after it is submitted next month. Then the case will be heard by a panel of three judges.

Meanwhile, the FBI is still hunting for Virgilio Pablo Paz and Jose Dionisio Suarez, two other Cuban exiles and former Union City residents, who are wanted for murder in connection with the Letelier case.