

# Ross and Novo return free and grateful

By Tom Golodik

Back in Hudson County following their acquittal on murder charges in the 1976 bombing death of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier and his aide, Ronni Moffitt, Guillermo Novo Sampol, 41, and Alvin Ross Diaz, 48, have thanked their supporters for the help and money they received.

The two showed up at the Spanish Mercantile Association dinner Saturday night, held at the association's social club at 4113 Palisades Ave., Union City, to welcome new members of the group.

Ross and Novo had been expected to attend the dinner, which started at 8 p.m., but they did not arrive until 2 a.m., after driving up from Washington, D.C.

According to Union City mayoral aide, Julia Valdivia, who attended the dinner, the two spoke briefly to the 150 persons gathered for the dinner, thanking them both for their moral support and the fund drives that raised \$400,000 for their defense.

While their second trial, which ended Saturday, cleared both of the earlier conviction that had been

overtuned on appeal, Novo was convicted by a federal jury in Washington on two counts of lying to a grand jury in denying knowledge of the case and of DINA, the Chilean secret police said to have arranged the murder.

The two had been sentenced to life imprisonment following their 1979 trial. Novo was released Saturday on \$200,000 bail by Judge Barrington Parker, who will sentence him on June 26 on the perjury charges. He faces up to 10 years in prison for that conviction.

Also indicted in the case originally was Novo's brother, Ignacio, whose conviction on lesser charges was also thrown out on appeal but who will not be retried because he has already spent two years in prison. Two other Union City men were also named in connection with the murders, but they have remained in hiding.

All five were members of the Cuban Nationalist Movement, an anti-Castro group reportedly responsible for a number of violent acts against the Cuban government.

JERRY JOERNA  
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