

Convicted bomber gets life

By RALPH RANALLI

A federal judge sentenced convicted bomber Alfred Trenkler of Milton to life in prison yesterday for masterminding a 1991 bombing which killed a Boston Police Bomb Squad technician and seriously wounded his partner.

The victims' families and law enforcement officials greeted the sentence with smiles and satisfaction — a marked contrast to their reaction to the 16-year sentence given to co-defendant Thomas Shay.

Officers' families applaud stiff sentence

"I don't think it will ever be over for us, but this is certainly a happy day for us," said Cynthia Hurley, the widow of slain police officer Jeremiah Hurley.

Judge Rya W. Zobel handed down the sentence despite a 45-minute speech from Trenkler about his innocence.

"I am not a violent person, I am a non-violent person," Trenkler, 37, said in a long, sometimes repetitive speech in which he

outlined his life. He accused federal prosecutors of ignoring evidence that he said implicated Shay's father.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul V. Kelly, who prosecuted the case, said Boston Police and U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents had gotten their man.

"We sifted through this evidence painstakingly over the course of a year before presenting it to a

grand jury, and then we tried this case not once but twice and both (juries) came to the same result," Kelly said.

"I think it's the appropriate sentence; it was a horrific crime."

Foley said yesterday that he feels the case is now closed.

"The perpetrator is going to jail for life, he's off the streets," said Foley, who lost an eye and the hearing in one ear

from the Oct. 28, 1991, blast.

Boston Police Commissioner Paul Evans said he believes the life sentence sent a message to rank-and-file police officers that their lives and work are valued.

"I think the most culpable person was Trenkler. I think without his skill and expertise, Officer Hurley would still be alive," Evans said. "I'm not saying it makes up for it,

but this is a very gratifying day."

In November a jury found Trenkler, 37, guilty of conspiracy, receiving explosives, and malicious destruction of property resulting in the death of a police officer.

Prosecutors charged that Trenkler and his friend and lover, 21-year-old Shay, conspired to kill Shay's father with a powerful car bomb. The motive was revenge and greed, revenge for Shay's abusive childhood and greed for insurance money.