

4-A THE TAMPA TRIBUNE, Tuesday, November 6, 1979



Fourteen Held In Shooting Rampage

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP) — Fourteen men, described by a judge as "imminently dangerous to others of the community," were ordered held without bond Monday in a shooting rampage that left five persons dead at an anti-Ku Klux Klan rally.

Persons outside the courtroom said they could hear voices singing "God Bless America" and "Onward Christian Soldiers" in the holding cell where the suspects awaited their court appearances.

Four persons died at the scene of Saturday's shootings in a predominantly black housing project. A fifth victim, Michael Nathan, a physician from Durham, died Monday at a Greensboro hospital. Nine other persons were injured.

Twelve men were arrested a few hundred feet from the scene of the shootings, where gunmen fired repeatedly into a crowd gathered for an anti-Klan march sponsored by the leftist Workers Viewpoint Organization. Police seized a yellow van that was packed with pistols, shotguns and rifles.

Each of the 12 arrested Saturday faces four counts of murder and one count of conspiracy to commit murder. District Attorney Michael A. Schlosser said before the fifth victim died that he expected other charges to be filed.

Two suspects were arrested in Winston-Salem on Sunday. Each was charged with one count of conspiracy to commit murder.

In Monday's court hearing, District Court Judge Robert Cecil ordered the defendants jailed pending a probable-cause hearing on Nov. 20. He denied bond for any of the men after Schlosser described them as "a band of marauders, 14 strong, who descended on Guilford County and cut a path of destruction that left dead and bloody bodies."

In handcuffed pairs, the defendants were brought into the courtroom to hear the charges and to tell Cecil whether they planned to hire a lawyer.

Wearing wrinkled and ill-fitting jail-issued coveralls, most of the men stood passively and said nothing except for simple answers to Cecil's questions.

One defendant, however, asked the judge if he could make a statement. Cecil agreed. "God save America and this honorable court," Rayford Milano Caudle said as he left the courtroom.

The defendants were brought back to the courtroom for a brief bond hearing after their initial appearances. All but one asked to have court-appointed attorneys.

In an unusual security move, Cecil ordered families and friends of the suspects as well as other spectators kept out of the courtroom, but news reporters were allowed to view the proceedings.

Numerous unanswered questions remained regarding Saturday's shootings.

Nelson Johnson, an organizer of the anti-Klan rally, said at a news conference Sunday that the site of the gathering had been discreetly moved in an attempt to prevent violence but the attackers apparently had no problem finding where the marchers were gathered. Also, police were unable to explain exactly why the nearest officers were about a block away.

Police said Johnson was asked by one officer to postpone the march as the crowd began to gather. But Johnson categorized that statement as "a lie. This did not happen."

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