

# Klan From Page A1

Nazi from Winston-Salem, sat directly in front of me. Although I had seen pictures of the nine men on the news following the Nov. 3 incident, I almost wasn't able to tell who was who.

All of the defendants were dressed in suits, sporting slicked-back or freshly-cut hair styles and night-before-shined shoes. But you could tell they weren't comfortable. One Klansman wore red-striped sweat socks with a blue, three-piece suit.

Also at the front of the courtroom were nine attorneys and four U.S. Marshalls. On the other side of the defendants sat Daniel L. Bell II, chief prosecutor; two other attorneys, a local FBI man and several more U.S. Marshalls. In the middle of the courtroom is a model of the housing project in Greensboro where the shooting occurred and wall maps of the area. All around the front portion of the courtroom are video monitors.

For a person who is used to seeing one complainant and one defendant, and a lawyer to each side, I found it difficult to know who was who and who represented whom. And the fact that no names were given didn't help much. I wasn't alone in my confusion, though. The jurors sat on the edge of their seats as if trying to sort out who was who and what was going on.

## The Secret Jury

As the day's proceedings began, the all-white six-man, six-woman jury and four white alternate jurors filed into the courtroom. Although the biographies of the jurors are not yet public, on first looking at them my mind raced trying to decide if they looked like racists.

Only four of the people looked younger than 30, half had gray hair and all looked very solemn and bothered—maybe because the trial is expected to last three months. They looked very different from the jurors for the state trial, which might be considered a plus for the prosecution.

The jury at the state trial in 1980 was again all-white and the foreman was a Cuban refugee named Octavio Manduley, who belonged to an organization characterized in the media as "an anti-Castro organization." Manduley admitted that he knew little about the Nazis or the KKK, except that they were "patriotic" groups.

Also on the last jury was William Browning, who said he felt sympathy for anyone sitting on the defense side of the court, and three others who had known biases against the CWP, but who favored either the Klan or Nazis.

The only information available on this jury is that one juror admitted in the closed jury selections that her grandfather was a Klansman, but she said she felt sure she could listen to the trial and reach a fair decision.

I tried unsuccessfully to decide which one she was. Was she the older lady with the well-teased bouffant hairstyle or the well-dressed lady with a striking new hair cut? I couldn't be sure.

The one thing I am sure of is that the defendants seemed to take the trial lightly.

Wood had a legal pad that he drew red and green dots on. And it was either Coleman Pridmore, exalted cyclops (president) of the Invisible Empire of the Lincoln County Klan or Roy Toney who constantly played eye games with the sparse audience of media people. One or the other tried to gain eye contact and then stared intensely at his subject.

Dawson smiled or winked at the audience whenever a positive point in the trial was made. Griffin sat on the end of the bench with the patience of a two-year-old at a Sunday morning church service. And Jerry Paul Smith, colonel of security of the North Carolina Invisible Empire of the KKK and the one seen on the news videos of the shootout with two guns in his hand firing at the demonstrators, slept.

The others appeared restless and bothered, and they all acted as if they had something better to do than sit in court all day.

## Somebody Was Guilty

As the prosecution exhausted its list of the day's witnesses, including one news photographer and three cameramen who filmed the 88-second shootout between the CWP and the Klan and Nazis, I, too, became a little weary of the trial.

But not because I didn't understand the importance of the proceedings or what impact the jury's verdict might have on Klan activity in North Carolina; rather, I was upset.

The attorneys for the state and the defense spent half the day objecting to what the other side was saying or presenting technical information that I'm sure the jury was puzzled about. But the state's attorneys, unlike those in the first trial, did appear to have some human concern for the five dead demonstrators. They referred to them as people or demonstrators, and not as "communists."

I also grew angry watching the video monitors and seeing Smith firing at Cesar Cauce as he crawled on his hands and knees to safety or David Matthews shooting Dr. James Michael Waller in the back or Matthews shooting at Sandra Neely Smith who had been hit in the head with a wooden stick that had put a part in her skull or Dr. Michael Nathan, who lay in the street with his head surrounded in a pool of his own blood. I was appalled that the earlier trial had produced not-guilty verdicts. What would it take to prove that somebody was responsible for the deaths of five people?

But I remembered that I could not react this way. I was a reporter. I was supposed to be unbiased and fair and listen to both sides and report accurately. I was not to make a decision as to guilt or innocence.

Suddenly, I was shaken back into reality as the judge pounded on his huge desk signifying the end of the day's proceedings. Court would start again the next morning.

I got into the elevator with another reporter, the two of us discussing the day's proceedings. Before the door closed, several of the Klansmen on trial also got in. Again, I felt that same fear that I had felt earlier that morning. But it was a short ride from the second to the first floor. A lot less than 88 seconds.

# Black districts proposed From Page A1

Though a number of black elected officials have embraced it, his plan has a long road to travel if it is to be adopted, Little says.

The plan has to receive public support and the support of the present five-member house delegation of which Dr. C.B. Hauser and Annie Brown Kennedy are black members.

Alderman Larry Womble, who supports the Little plan, says the delegation should endorse it as well because it is the fair thing to do.

"I think that they (present delegation) should go with two single-member districts," Womble says. "A three-judge panel has said we have to do it by March 16 and, if we don't, they will. We have been able to do that and retain the two seats we (blacks) have already and it seems fair to me that the delegation should support the plan."

Alderman Vivian Burke, who also supports Little's plan, says she thinks it will be favored by the present house delegation.

"The Forsyth County delegation will look at this plan and the percentage of blacks in this community and say that we ought to be a shining example of what's right and fair," Burke says. Alderman Virginia Newell agrees.

"The courts have shown that the county has not lived up to its commitment to black people and this proposal gives them a chance to do that," she says. "It's a good one and we ought to sit down and look at it."

The plan obviously has the blessings of Winston-Salem's black aldermen and the Black Political Awareness League unanimously voted to endorse it. But whether the Forsyth County delegation to the state House will support it remains to be seen.

Kennedy says she has not had enough time to study the plan carefully to comment on whether the delegation will support it.

Hauser also says he has not had an opportunity to look at the plan but hopes the delegation will support the concept of two

predominantly black single-member districts.

"I hope that if we can get two, we get two," Hauser says.

But Walter Marshall, acting president of the NAACP, says he is doubtful the delegation will endorse Little's proposal.

"Most of the delegation has depended on the stable black vote to get them into office," Marshall says. "If they vote to remove us from their voting rolls, they would be voting themselves out of office. The margin between the Democrats and Republicans has always been the black vote. Without us, they lose."

But Little says the black community's history of support for white Democrats is precisely the reason the delegation should approve the plan. "For so long they have been riding us and riding us," he says. "We have been their margin of victory even when they turn on us. We helped send R.J. (Childress), (Tom) Womble and (Margaret) Tennille to Raleigh. Now we need

them." If the black community and the present delegation cannot come to terms on a plan by March 16, or any other deadline the courts

may impose, no primaries or elections can be held. Forsyth County's primary election is scheduled for May 8.

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