

Murder Case Witnesses Recant 7 Years After 2 Got Life Terms

Accused 'Hurricane' Carter and Another in Triple Slaying

By SELWYN RAAB

Special to The New York Times

PATERSON, N.J., Sept. 26—Seven years after former boxing star Rubin Carter (Hurricane) Carter and another man were sentenced to life imprisonment for a triple murder here, new evidence has been uncovered that raises serious doubts about their guilt.

The two principal prosecution witnesses, the only ones who identified Mr. Carter and a co-defendant, John Artis, as the black gunmen who killed three whites in a barroom shooting, have now recanted their testimony.

When Mr. Carter was arrested he was a leading contender for the middleweight championship. The trial of Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis took place during a time of racial tension here and attracted wide attention in New Jersey.

'He Was Framed'

The two witnesses, both white and both former convicts, told The New York Times that they had been pressured by Passaic County detectives into committing perjury. In separate statements—each made without the other's knowledge—they said they had deliberately and wrongly identified Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis as the slayers. One of the witnesses also said that detectives had made racial slurs about the two defendants.

"There's no doubt Carter was framed," said Arthur D. Bradley, one of the recanting witnesses.

When he testified against Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis, Mr. Bradley was 23 years old and awaiting trials for a series of holdups unrelated to the triple murders. He faced a maximum term of more than 80 years in prison, but after serving three years he was paroled in 1970.

"There's only one reason I

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Rubin Carter at the New Jersey State Prison at Trenton



John Artis at the Leesburg State Prison Farm

The New York Times/William E. Sauro

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testified," he explained in an interview. "That was all the time [the long sentence]. They [the police] never would have got me to talk otherwise. I saw a way out of my own mess."

Mr. Bradley said that contrary to his courtroom testimony he had witnessed no part of the murders or of the killers' escape. "I lied to save myself," he said.

The other key witness, Alfred P. Bello, said: "They [the police] promised they'd take care of me if I got jammed up [arrested] again." Mr. Bello also said that he had hoped "to capitalize" on a \$10,500 reward offered for the capture of the gunmen.

Mr. Bello maintained that he had seen the actual murderers at the scene of the killings, but that his courtroom identification of Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis was "a grave mistake."

'Big Brother Line'

Persistent police pressure, Mr. Bello asserted, had confused him. "They gave me a big brother line," he said. "The cops told me I'd be doing justice for the families of the white victims—it would be an eye for an eye."

Mr. Bello, who was 23 years old at the time of the trial, has a long police record dating from the age of 18. He is now serving a nine-month sentence at the Bergen County Jail in Hackensack for burglary.

Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley said they had long been troubled by their false testimony, but added that they had been fearful of recanting it because of possible harassment by the police in Passaic County—a fear both said they still held.

The five-year statute of limitations for perjury has expired and neither Mr. Bradley nor Mr. Bello can now be prosecuted on that charge in the Carter-Artis case.

Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley were each separately sought out by The New York Times. Mr. Bradley said he was now willing to admit his perjury because his conscience had troubled him and "I knew sooner or later the truth would come out."

A different explanation was offered by Mr. Bello. For years, he said, he had regretted that his false testimony had resulted in life imprisonment for Mr.

Carter and Mr. Artis, but he said he feared reprisals by the Passaic police if he made a public disclosure. He also said his last arrest had convinced him that "the cops are out to get me anyway and there's no reason for me to protect them anymore."

Both Sign Statements

Mr. Bradley and Mr. Bello have each recanted in additional signed statements made to an investigator for the New Jersey Public Defender's Office, which is conducting a separate inquiry on behalf of Mr. Carter.

Because of this new information, Paul J. Feldman, Mr. Carter's lawyer, said today he would soon file a court motion for a new trial for both Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis.

Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley both accused Detective Lieutenant Vincent DeSimone of the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office as the officer chiefly responsible for pressuring them into perjured testimony in 1967. The officer headed the triple murder investigation.

Lieutenant DeSimone, who is now in charge of the county's homicide squad, angrily denied the charges. He described the statements by Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley as "nonsense," adding: "We don't manufacture witnesses."

On Monday he refused to agree to a lengthy interview and ordered this reporter to leave his office at 77 Hamilton Street here.

Vincent E. Hull Jr., a former Passaic County assistant prosecutor who was in charge of the prosecution at the Carter-Artis trial, said in an interview earlier this week that it would be improper for him to comment on the case because it again may go before the courts.

Racially Troubled City

At the time of the triple murder in 1966, Paterson was a racially troubled, decaying industrial city. It had a population of 138,000, including 45,000 blacks and 10,000 Puerto Ricans. During the mid-nineteen-sixties, the city was the scene of several racial disorders touched off by charges of discrimination and police brutality.

In 1966, the 29-year-old Mr. Carter had achieved an international reputation as a hard-hitting boxer who had fought main events in Madison Square Garden, Paris, London and South America. Outside the ring, Mr. Carter, a flashy dresser and a flamboyant personality, was well known in his home town of Paterson.

He also was familiar to the police because before he had turned to boxing, he had an ar-

rest record for robbery and assault as a youth and that background had been frequently publicized by ring promoters to enhance his fierce reputation as a fighter.

In contrast, Mr. Artis at the time of his arrest was an obscure 21-year-old working at various jobs who was about to be drafted into the Army. The only recognition that had come his way in Paterson had been in high school, where he had been a member of the football, track and basketball teams.

Both Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis were interviewed in prison by The New York Times.

The triple murder occurred early in the morning of June 17, 1966, at the Lafayette Grill at 428 East 18th Street. The tavern, at the corner of Lafayette Street, was in the dingy northeast section of Paterson, a neighborhood whose racial composition was changing from white to black working class.

Four Gunned Down

According to undisputed testimony, two armed black men entered the bar at about 2:30 A.M. Inside were the bartender and three customers. The bartender, without saying a word, hurled a bottle at the intruders. The assailants, one armed with a 12-gauge shotgun, the other with a .32-caliber pistol, began firing. The fusillade lasted less than 15 seconds and then the two gunmen walked out without taking any money from the cash register.

Killed instantly were James Oliver, 52, the bartender and part owner of the tavern, who was struck by a shotgun blast, and Fred Nauykas, 60, who was cut down by .32-caliber bullets. A third victim, Mrs. Hazel Tannis, 51, died of shotgun and pistol wounds a month later.

The only person who survived was 42-year-old William Martins, who was shot in the head once with a .32-caliber bullet and who eventually lost his left eye.

After the attack, two witnesses in addition to Mr. Bello said they saw the gunmen get into a white car and drive away.

At 2:35 A.M., five minutes after the slayings, two Paterson policemen, Sergeant Theodore Capter and Police Officer Angelo De Chellis, who had received a radio report about the getaway car with two blacks in it, noticed a speeding white car about seven blocks from the murder scene. The white auto was heading east, possibly toward Route 4, a major highway. But in trying to cut off the white car, the officers, lost

sight of it before they could determine if it had entered Route 4.

White Car Halted

At 2:40 A.M., about 14 blocks from the Lafayette Grill, the same police officers stopped a similar-looking white car which they said was moving slowly in a different direction—south—from the first auto they had pursued. Inside the car were Mr. Carter, Mr. Artis and a third black man, John Royster. The car, a white 1966 Dodge, had been rented by Mr. Carter and was being driven by Mr. Artis.

After checking the car registration and Mr. Artis's driver's license, the police permitted the three to leave.

Later, after getting a more complete description of the getaway car, Sergeant Capter and Officer De Chellis believed that the Carter vehicle resembled it and they drove off looking for it. Shortly after 3 A.M., the policemen came across Mr. Carter's Dodge again, this time about five blocks from the murder scene.

Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis, now the only occupants, were directed to drive to the Lafayette Grill, ordered out of the car, and then taken in a police van to Paterson police headquarters.

No charges were then brought against the boxer or Mr. Artis. They were questioned by detectives for 17 hours and released. Twelve days later both men waived their rights against self-incrimination and testified before a grand jury. No indictments were handed up by that grand jury.

Paterson, in the grip of a crime wave, was further jolted by the triple murders. A few hours before the Lafayette Grill slayings, a black tavern owner had been fatally shot by a white man and that summer fears of impending racial clashes drifted through the city.

'A Heinous Crime'

There were rumors in white neighborhoods that the Lafayette Grill murders had been committed in retaliation for the death of the black tavern owner. A second story circulated through the city that the black gunmen had killed three whites as part of their initiation into a black supremacist group.

The Lafayette Grill homicides were described by Frank X. Graves Jr., then Paterson's mayor, as "one of the most heinous crimes" in the city's history. Mayor Graves ordered the assignment of 100 police officers out of a total force of 341 to the investigation.

As a further incentive to solve the crime, the Mayor promised

promotions and three-month vacations to officers responsible for arresting the criminals. In addition, the city and a tavern owners' association offered rewards totaling \$10,500 for the arrest and convictions of the killers.

A police search for the murder weapons failed and there were no arrests during that summer of 1966. Mr. Carter, without any police objection, left in July for an unsuccessful fight in Argentina. It was his last bout. On the night of October 14, 1966—four months after the bar murders—he and Mr. Artis were arrested and accused of the triple homicide.

The police account of the events leading to the arrests was reconstructed during a tense 14-day trial in April, 1967. According to prosecution testimony, Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis had given conflicting statements to detectives about their movements on the murder night. But the main reason for their indictments stemmed from testimony obtained by the Passaic County Prosecutor's

staff from Mr. Bradley and Mr. Bello in October, 1966.

Both men had admitted that on the night of the murders they had been breaking into the Ace Sheet Metal Company at 351 East 16th Street, about two blocks from the Lafayette Grill. Mr. Bello acted as the lookout while Mr. Bradley used a tire iron to break into the factory.

Mr. Bello testified that after hearing gunfire he walked toward the tavern. On the sidewalk outside of the bar, he said, he saw Mr. Carter with a shotgun in his hand and Mr. Artis with a pistol in his hand. After getting as close as 12 to 14 feet from them, Mr. Bello said, he turned and ran. However, he continued, he was able to see them drive off in a white Dodge.

In a dramatic moment at the trial, Mr. Bello pointed at the defendants, positively identifying each one.

On the witness stand, Mr. Bello acknowledged that after the shootings he had walked into the bar, stepped over one of the bodies, and stole \$62 from the cash register. Then he called a telephone operator to report the crime and waited for the police.

At the trial, Mr. Bradley, who followed on the witness stand, identified only Mr. Carter. In testimony similar to Mr. Bello's, he swore that Mr. Carter emerged from the bar with a shotgun. Mr. Bradley also said that a few minutes before the crime he had seen a white car

slowly cruising in the neighborhood, with Mr. Carter in the front seat.

These two identifications were vital for the prosecution since no other witness could place the defendants at the site of the crime. Mr. Marins, the sole survivor, had failed to identify Mr. Carter or Mr. Artis as his assailants when they were brought to his hospital bed several hours after the shooting. In addition, he had originally described the shotgun killer as weighing 175 to 190 pounds, almost six feet tall, with a pencil-line mustache but no beard. Mr. Carter was a muscular 160 pounds, 5 feet 8 inches tall, with a thick, drooping mustache and a goatee.

None of the witnesses besides Mr. Bello testified that they had gotten a good look at the pistol-carrying gunman. Mr. Artis was lanky and almost six feet tall.

Mrs. Tanis, the bar patron who survived for a month after she was wounded, had given the police a description similar to Mr. Marins's.

Dispute Over Bullet

Besides the two purported eye witnesses, the prosecution's other major piece of evidence was an unspent .32-caliber bullet that Detective Emil De Robbio said he had found in the front seat of the Carter car while searching it after the murders. Ballistics reports, however, disclosed that the bullet allegedly found in the car was copper plated while the .32-caliber bullets used in the murders were lead plated. Mr. Carter denied that the police had showed him the unspent bullet during the time they questioned him and said that he had first learned of it five months later, just before the trial began.

Mr. Carter, when not in training for a fight, had a reputation as a night owl in Paterson's black bars. He testified that on the night of the murders he had visited several drinking spots with John Royster and Mr. Artis, whom he knew casually but not well.

Both defendants later said that the first time they had been stopped by the police with Mr. Royster in the car they were driving from the Nite Spot Cocktail Lounge on East 18th Street—five blocks from the murder scene—toward Mr. Carter's home on 20th Avenue.

The boxer said he wanted to pick up more money at his home. Mr. Artis was driving the car in that general direction when the police halted him five minutes after the shooting. At that time, according to prosecution testimony, the police released them, apparently be-

cause there were three men in the car, not two suspects as reported in the first police broadcast of the shooting.

After picking up cash at his home, Mr. Carter said, he and his two companions returned to the Nite Spot and stayed there until it closed at 3 A.M. Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis said they then dropped off Mr. Royster at his home and were driving toward the apartment of a girl friend of Mr. Artis when they were halted a second time and held by the police.

Six Supporting Witnesses

Six defense witnesses—all black—supported Mr. Carter's description of his movements between 2 A.M. and 3 A.M. on the murder night. But Mr. Hull, the assistant Passaic County prosecutor, brought out in cross-examination that these witnesses had given contradictory statements to the police shortly before the trial.

Because the witnesses had been drinking on the murder night, Mr. Hull questioned their reliability as to dates and exact times and he labeled the defense account of the movements of Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis a "concocted lie."

Two important defense witnesses testified that they had been intimidated and shouted at during questioning by the police. They said the police confused them into giving inconsistent statements.

Mr. Hull, in his summation to the jury, stressed the importance of the identifications of the defendants by Mr. Bradley and Mr. Bello. The prosecutor noted that both had testified they had not received any promises of favorable treatment because of pending charges. "When you take all these factors into consideration," he declared, "what they testified to, it rings true."

Verdict Is Upheld

Holding up the blood-stained clothes of the three victims and their photographs, Mr. Hull called for a guilty verdict, with sentences of death in the electric chair.

There was no attempt by the prosecution to establish a motive behind Mr. Carter's and Mr. Artis's alleged crime. Establishment of a motive is not necessary for conviction in New Jersey. An all-white jury deliberated for four-and-one-half hours before finding both defendants guilty with recommendations of life imprisonment.

In 1969 New Jersey's seven-

Supreme Court judges ruled unanimously that there was no legal reason to reverse the verdict.

A year later, Fred W. Hogan, an investigator for the New Jersey Public Defender's Office, an agency which represents indigent defendants, became interested in Mr. Carter's case. Mr. Carter said he had spent \$20,000 in legal fees and was penniless when Mr. Hogan began his inquiries.

Mr. Hogan and friends of Mr. Carter came to this reporter in September, 1973, and asked for investigative help in determining if there might be any grounds for reopening the case. The reporter and Mr. Hogan then began a search for Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley. Two months later Mr. Bello was found in prison. Mr. Bradley was found in New Jersey last May.

In recent months, Mr. Hogan said he had obtained signed recantations from Mr. Bradley and Mr. Bello.

Before his testimony at the Carter-Artis trial, Mr. Bello had been convicted six times of robbery, burglary and theft and had been paroled two months before the Lafayette Grill murders.

Mr. Bello, now 30, was interviewed twice by The New York Times during the last month at the Bergen County Jail in Hackensack. He is a stocky 160 pounds, 5 feet 9 inches tall, with straight black hair and a carefully groomed mustache. During the interviews, he wore a green prison uniform with a half-sleeved shirt. On his right arm he has a tattoo: "Born to Raise Hell."

Mr. Bello said he had been questioned by detectives on the night of the murders and frequently thereafter during the summer and early fall of 1966. He said he had originally given detectives a "true" version of what he had seen, except for his involvement in the Ace Metal Company burglary.

He said he had stopped in the Lafayette Grill for a glass of beer about 15 minutes before the slayings and that a young black woman came in and ordered a six-pack of beer to take out. "She looked at everyone in the bar," he continued, "and I seen that look before and figured something would happen and I got up and walked out fast."

Later, still acting as a lookout in the factory burglary, Mr. Bello recalled seeing a white car

cruising by, with two men seated in the front and a woman in the back. When he heard the gunfire, he walked toward the Lafayette Grill. The closest he got to the killers was about a dozen feet, he said, at which point he ran and hid in an alley and watched them drive away in a car he believed to be a Cadillac.

Mr. Bello later remembered seeing the police bring Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis to the Lafayette Grill in a Dodge. Their clothes, he recalled, did not resemble those of the gunmen.

The two killers, he said, wore dark suits, either black or brown, while Mr. Carter had on a tan sports jacket and Mr. Artis was coatless and wore a blue sport shirt.

"I tried to tell it right but they [the police] wouldn't listen," Mr. Bello said. "They'd go over the story and kept saying 'These [Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis] are the guys.'"

During the police questioning, Mr. Bello said detectives warned him that he might become a suspect in the murders unless he helped them by incriminating Mr. Carter and Mr. Artis.

He said detectives referred to the two black men as "niggers, Muslims, animals and murderers" and told him he would be performing a "public service" by "getting them off the streets" and thereby protecting whites. "They told me help your own people and I went for it," Mr. Bello said.

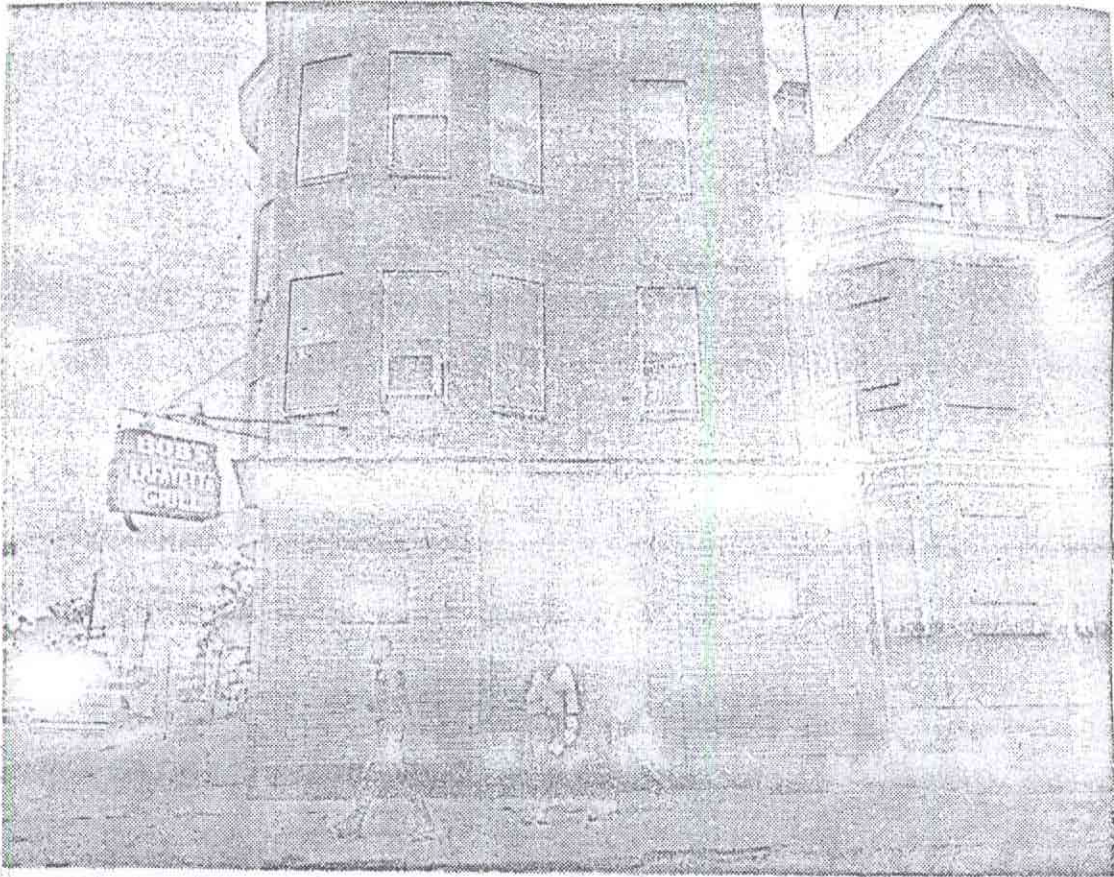
Reward Is Stressed

During that summer, Mr. Bello said he had heard rumors that Mr. Carter had committed the murders as an initiation into a black power sect.

"All the cops were convinced Carter and Artis did it and they wanted me to believe it," he continued. "I conceived in my mind that it could be them. I didn't know that without me there was no case; that there was no other evidence. I didn't realize I was a pivotal guy."

The detectives, he said, emphasized the reward and "I figured I could capitalize on the money if something could happen."

In October, 1966, Mr. Bello said he admitted for the first time to detectives his role in the factory burglary and implicated Mr. Bradley in that burglary and as a potential witness in the murders. "I believe I was doing the right thing," he explained. "They had me in a



The Lafayette Grill in Paterson, N. J., as it looks today, eight years after shooting there in which three died The New York Times

room with 15 guys around and one of them said "This is the way it's got to be."

Before the trial, Mr. Bello said, Lieutenant DeSimone advised him to "take the money [the \$10,500 reward] and split [leave Paterson]. They promised me they'd take care of me if I got jammed up."

After the murder trial, both Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley were denied the reward money because of the conviction appeals filed by Mr. Carter. They were never prosecuted for the factory burglary attempt.

In the seven years since the trial, Mr. Bello has been arrested four times. The first three accusations, all minor charges, were dismissed. He was, however, convicted of burglary in Passaic County last June.

Detective's Visit Recalled

According to Mr. Bello, Lieutenant DeSimone visited him at the Passaic County jail last August and he told the detective that his original testimony was "a mistake." Upon hearing this, Mr. Bello said, Lieutenant DeSimone warned him: "I'm going to tell you something. If you open your mouth you're going to do 100 years."

Lieutenant DeSimone declined to reply to Mr. Bello's accusation.

Mr. Bello maintained that he had been mistreated at the county jail in Paterson before the Lieutenant's visit and that the mistreatment increased afterward. He said that he had been attacked by a guard, denied proper medical attention and sent to a county hospital

for mental observation. On Sept. 6 he was transferred from the Passaic County Jail to the Bergen County Jail, where Mr. Bello said his treatment has been "excellent."

Passaic County prison officials denied Mr. Bello's charges, contending that he was "a troublemaker" who provoked fights with guards and other inmates. Bergen County jail officials said Mr. Bello had caused no problems there.

Mr. Bello said one of his reasons for remaining silent seven years about his self-described, perjured testimony was his belief that the murder convictions would be set aside by an appeal. Although he conceded that he had been worried about a perjury conviction, his chief concern now, he said, was the possibility of reprisals by the Passaic police because of his recantation.

"I believe once this case is out I'm going back to jail—they'll find something," he said.

'Vision Was Blocked'

The other chief prosecution witness, Mr. Bradley, now 30, declared in his statements to The New York Times that he



Rubin (Hurricane) Carter in 1966

had not observed any part of the murders or their aftermath because he had been two blocks from the tavern breaking into the metal factory. In two interviews, he conceded testifying falsely to having seen Mr. Carter before and after the murders at the Lafayette Grill.

"My vision was blocked," Mr. Bradley said. "I didn't see anything."

Mr. Bradley has spent 12 years in prison on a variety of convictions. He and Mr. Bello met in the early nineteen-sixties while both were serving prison terms at the Bordentown Youth Correctional Institution. Until his partner implicated him in the Paterson factory burglary, Mr. Bradley said he had not been questioned by the police about the murder case.

In October, 1966, Mr. Bradley was back in Bordentown prison awaiting trial for four armed robbery charges when Passaic County detectives first approached him. He was then brought to Passaic County for questioning about the Lafayette Grill murders.

Most of the questioning was done by Lieutenant DeSimone, Mr. Bradley said. There were no physical threats and he offered this description of how he said he had been turned into a perjured prosecution witness:

"I was seeing like every day DeSimone and getting a general picture of what happened. They gave me the background [of the murders] and presented me more or less with general information to form a statement. They showed me a statement from Bello that helped fill out the picture.

"There's only one reason I testified. That was to stop all the time. They never would have got me to talk otherwise. I saw a way out of my own mess. I was 23 years old and facing 80 to 90 years in jail. I just bought my way out."

'Promise' Is Recounted

Mr. Bradley said that Lieutenant DeSimone and Mr. Hull, the former assistant prosecutor, promised they would "do everything we can to help you and I received a lot less time than I would have."

Neither Lieutenant DeSimone nor Mr. Hull would comment on Mr. Bradley's account.

Mr. Bradley said he was uncertain who intervened for him after he pleaded guilty to robbery and other charges in Essex, Union, Bergen, Morris and Passaic counties. He could have received prison terms totaling more than 80 years, but he was sentenced to one term of three to five years. After serving

three years, he was paroled in 1970 and has had no other arrests.

The judges who sentenced Mr. Bradley in 1967 could not be reached by telephone for comment on whether there had been any intervention in his behalf by Passaic County authorities.

Mr. Bradley is a quiet, slender man, who weighs about 160 pounds and is 5 feet 10 inches tall. He has reddish brown hair and a matching mustache. In recent interviews, he insisted that he was "trying to straighten out my life."

He said he had "almost" decided to tell the truth before the trial. "But once I got on the witness stand," he said, "and I thought of the time to be served, I decided to stick to the story."

Tells of 'Burden'

The perjury, he maintained, "has been a burden for eight years. It [recanting] is something I wanted to do for a very long time. I always knew it was a matter of time before there would be a knock on the door and I would have to tell someone."

Both Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley said they had not spoken to each other about their testimony before the Carter-Artis trial. Since then they have only met once, four years ago, according to both of them.

Mr. Carter, who is now 37, said in an interview at Trenton State prison that he held "no animosity" toward Mr. Bello or Mr. Bradley. "I know they are just part and parcel of what these prison institutions push out," he said. "They've been abused and misused and it was the police who are most to blame."

During his eight years in prison, Mr. Carter has been studying law books and he said it would be difficult in New Jersey's courts to set aside the guilty verdict on the basis of recanted evidence. "Once they get you in jail in New Jersey, they won't let you go," he said, "but I sure hope this new evidence will stand up."

Mr. Carter was sentenced to three life terms, two to be served consecutively. Thus, he must serve a minimum of 30 years and he will be ineligible for parole until 1997.

Born in Clifton, Mr. Carter grew up in the Paterson area. At the age of 11, he was sent to the Jamesburg Reformatory for an eight-year term after stabbing a man. The boy contended that he had acted in self-defense to thwart a homosexual assault by an adult.

He spent five years in the reformatory, but frightened, he said, of being transferred to the more severe Annandale Reformatory he escaped at the age of

16 and lived with an aunt in Philadelphia. The next year he joined the Army, served two years and received an honorable discharge.

In 1956, Mr. Carter was working as a foreman in a plastics plant in Paterson when he was arrested for having escaped from the reformatory three years earlier. At the age of 19 he sentenced to nine months at Annandale. Shortly after his release in 1957 he was convicted of three robberies and assaults and served a four-year term. Mr. Carter later said that those crimes were partly the result of his embitterment at being returned to the reformatory after clean records in the Army and in civilian life.

He learned how to box in prison and turned professional in 1961. As a fighter, he affected a fearsome pose, with a shaven bullet head, a drooping mustache and a beard. Possessing a powerful left hook, he was more of a puncher than a stylist and he won 13 of his first 21 fights by knockouts.

One of his biggest victories was the first-round knockout in 1963 of welterweight champion Emile Griffith in a non-title fight in Pittsburgh. A year later, at the peak of his career, Mr. Carter fought middleweight champion Joey Giardello for the title, losing a close decision in Mr. Giardello's home town of Philadelphia.

Hero to Other Convicts

Outside of the ring, Mr. Carter was active in civil-rights activities in Paterson. During press interviews in the nineteen-sixties he was outspoken about alleged police brutality in Paterson, other New Jersey cities and New York. At the time of his arrest he was a street worker for an antipoverty program, aiding youths in his city's black neighborhoods.

While in prison Mr. Carter has refused to wear prison clothes or work at institutional jobs. "If I did I'd be acknowledging my guilt," he explained. "I refuse to give up the independence of my mind or spirit and be warehoused into a uniform and prison life."

His independent attitude and his leadership on inmate councils at Trenton and Rahway prisons have made Mr. Carter a hero to many convicts. His photograph hangs on the walls of many cells in New Jersey prisons.

In addition to researching law books for his court appeals, Mr. Carter has written "The Sixteenth Round—From Number One Contender to No. 45472," an autobiography that will be published on Oct. 13 by Viking Press.

Recently, Mr. Carter lost the vision of his right eye, a condi-

tion he attributes to improper medical attention in prison. He now wears glasses.

Mr. Carter was married before his arrest and has an 11-year-old daughter. "I've survived eight years because of my wife and child," he said. "They give me the will to stay alive in here and vindicate myself."

Arrested on Birthday

John Artis was sentenced to three concurrent life terms and he will become eligible for parole in 1981, after having served fourteen-and-one-half years. He will mark his 29th birthday Oct. 15 in Leesburg State Prison, a minimal security institution.

"What Bello and Bradley are now saying proves what we said all along, that DeSimone and Hull made a deal with them," Mr. Artis said in an interview with The Times Wednesday at the prison.

"If they [Mr. Bello and Mr. Bradley] tell the exact truth it'll get me out," he said. "At the trial they thought they were playing a game. But they were playing with my life and with Rubin's life."

Dressed in a blue denim prison uniform, Mr. Artis recalled that he was booked for the triple murder on his 21st birthday. It was the only time he had ever been arrested. "I couldn't believe it," he said. "I believed then that if you tell the truth nothing bad could happen to you."

His worst moment during the 1967 trial came when the foreman of the jury announced the guilty verdict. "It was ghoul-ish," Mr. Artis recalled. "The man paused for a second, which felt like an eternity, before looking at me and saying 'with a recommendation of mercy for life imprisonment.' I couldn't believe I might be sentenced to death for something I didn't do."

"If I had walked home that night instead of getting a lift from Rubin I wouldn't be here," he said, shaking his head. "But they wanted to get Rubin and they didn't care about me. It just happened to be along for the ride."