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Arms Charges Dropped Against 16 Minutemen

NEW YORK, Oct. 19 (UPI)—Five-year-old weapons and conspiracy charges against 16 men linked by officials to the right-wing Minutemen have been dropped, officials said today.

The 16 were picked up Oct. 30, 1966, in a series of state-wide raids. At the time officials charged that the 16, all from New York state, had planned to bomb three camps they considered to be leftist. Officials said large quantities of weapons, including machine guns, explosives and a bazooka, were seized in the raids.

A grand jury returned 16 counts—14 of which were felony charges—against the men, but a series of court rulings led to the suppression as evidence of the seized firearms. Monday, acting on an application filed last Thursday by the Queens district attorney's office, the charges were dismissed.

"Because the police have blundered, the criminal must go free," commented Frederick J. Ludwig, chief assistant Queens district attorney. Ludwig termed the case "another casualty of Mapp vs. Ohio"—a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that said illegally seized evidence cannot be used in court.