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Virginia, Karen, 17, and Reg Murphy meet the press after the editor's release.

Murphy Kidnap Probe Deepens

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ATLANTA, Feb. 23—Flushed with triumph after the swift capture of two of the kidnapers of Atlanta Constitution Editor John R. (Reg) Murphy, federal authorities and Georgia police searched today for accomplices in the dramatic two-day abduction adventure.

"Colonel" William August Halm Williams, 33, and his wife, Betty, 26, were arrested in their \$30,000 suburban Lilburn home just five hours after payment of \$700,000 ransom led to Murphy's release at 8:30 p.m. Friday.

The FBI announced today that "a voluminous amount of U.S. currency" had been found in the Williams' residence, but declined to confirm that it amounted to the full ransom money.

Williams, a burly six-footer wearing a brown suede jacket with cowboy frills, was arraigned before a U.S. magistrate here and charged with the obstruction of interstate commerce through extortion, a violation of the Hobbs Act.

His wife, in slacks and a light raincoat,

was charged only with failing to report knowledge of a crime. Federal kidnaping charges were not pressed against the pair in the absence of proof that they had crossed state lines.

"My wife is innocent," Williams told newsmen as he entered the courtroom. "The army is defeated, but it's not like Waterloo," he said in an apparent reference to the American Revolutionary Army.

It is understood that the charges filed against Williams state that he was "aided and abetted by others." Police and FBI sources said that no proof has been turned up yet indicating that others were involved or who they might be. But these sources added that a search is under way in Georgia and three surrounding states to establish suspected underworld links with the kidnaping.

Magistrate J. Roger Thompson set bond for Williams at \$1 million and scheduled a preliminary hearing for March 4. Mrs. Williams was held under \$500,000 bond.

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MURPHY, From A1

In his statement at the arraignment, Williams indicated that he has been previously arrested for forgery and the interstate transportation of stolen vehicles and served 18 months in jail on car stealing charges. In 1961 he was put on probation for one year for the forgery.

Sources close to Georgia police indicated that Williams has a reputation in underworld circles as a "wheel man" who drives stolen vehicles rather than a major operator in his own right.

FBI and police sources declined to disclose how they were able to make the arrest so quickly. However, Murphy said in an account of his experience in his newspaper that his wife, Virginia, had noted that Williams was driving "a dark green Ford Torino" when he drove away with Murphy on Wednesday night.

Sources close to the police indicated that one of the cars used in the pickup of the ransom money corresponded to Mrs. Murphy's description, and this is believed to have been a factor pointing to Williams.

It is not clear whether Atlanta Constitution managing editor Jim Minter, who dropped off the ransom money, was able to report the license number of the car in question to the police.

It is understood that tips from the Atlanta police and the police in nearby Dekalb and Gwinnett counties based on information from underworld informants figured in the arrests.

Murphy said he did not know exactly how the FBI had picked up the Williamses

so quickly. He said that when he was interviewed by FBI after his release "they told me what I told them clicked into place with what they already had."

In an interview today, Murphy said that he had identified Williams in a photograph, and "it was easy to do. There couldn't be any mistake that it was the same man who came to my house on Wednesday night."

Murphy was kidnapped after agreeing to go with Williams, who posed as a contractor desiring to give away 300,000 gallons of fuel oil for tax reasons.

Murphy said in the interview that "someone is obviously behind him, wheeling and dealing in money, so there must be a gang involved."

At one point during his captivity, Murphy recalled, he had asked Williams what he would do with so much money. It brought the reply that "I'm not going to be allowed to keep this. I'm going to have to give it over to the army."

Later, Murphy said, after the payment of the ransom money but before his release, Williams stopped to make a phone call and said "something that sounded like 'Are you going to come over here to pick it up?'"

Murphy said he was "very skeptical" that the American Revolutionary Army was actually a political group and that it was "entirely possible" that there were "professionals, you know, gangs, or some professionals to handle that kind of money, and it is clear that others were involved in the money."

Murphy said Williams had told him that he planned to sell the ransom money for

\$500,000 and that "a foreign government" was involved. "I guess he meant that he knew it would be hot money and had made arrangements to make a switch."

Murphy said Williams gave "some details" about the purported American Revolutionary Army, including a reference to 223 members and six colonels nationally, organized into regional units such as the "American Eagle One" unit in the Southeast and the "American Falcon" group in the Northeast. Murphy declared, however, that Williams' political views seemed very "disoriented and disorganized."

Then he added that his paper had published contro-

versial articles last November dealing with alleged attempts to bribe members of the state parole board to grant an early release to convicted amphetamine smuggler Lee Gilstrap. The articles attracted widespread emmit in underworld circles, and it is "perfectly possible," Murphy said, "that there is some sort of a connection here, though I wouldn't have any idea how to prove it."

Gilstrap, 60, is still in the Jackson State Prison. The Gilstrap family has a Jesse James-like reputation for moonshining and other activities in the southern end of the north Georgia mountains, but it was amphetamine-smuggling from Mex-

in Murphy Kidnaping

ico on a large scale that brought Gilstrap's conviction.

Informed sources here indicated that elements linked to Gilstrap are among the principal targets of the current police investigation of possible suspects.

"If you look at it objectively, it's more likely it was contrived than real. It's hard for me to believe that a man deeply committed to a political cause would do it the way he did and talk the way he did," Murphy said.

On one theme only Murphy went on the Colonel had a "consistent, clear and specific group of ideas he always kept pushing and knew exactly what he thought about. His central hatred of

Jews kept coming up all the time. At one point he said that the U.S. had given \$2.2 billion to Israel and that's the first thing, that's the kind of thing that's going to

be stopped when we take over."

Asked about the role of The Atlanta Constitution and The Atlanta Journal in reporting on organized

crime in Georgia, Murphy said, "We have not had any major series, as such, in a continuing way, in recent months. But we have gone after gamblers quite a lot."



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Kidnaping suspects William August Halm Williams and his wife, Betty Ruth, at the federal building in Atlanta.