

# Slayer of Nazi Party Leader Is Convicted

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP)—John Patler, kicked out of the American Nazi Party last April, was convicted today of murdering party leader George Lincoln Rockwell.

Patler, 29, faces a 20-year prison sentence. The prosecution had demanded he be sent to the electric chair.

A jury of 10 men and 2 women brought in the verdict of first-degree murder as Patler wached ashen-faced. As deputies led him from the Arlington Court room he turned to his lawyers and said "Thanks an awful lot."

**THERE WAS NO** immediate word on whether the conviction would be appealed.

The jury rejected the prosecution demand for the death penalty and instead recommended the 20-year sentence. Judge Charles S. Russell, who under Virginia law could overrule the jury's decision, said he would formally impose the prison sentence on Monday.

Rockwell, 49-year-old "fuehrer" of the anti-Negro, anti-Jewish Nazi group, was shot to death while getting into his car at an Arlington shopping center last Aug. 25. Police said his assassin shot from the roof of the shopping center, using a 7.63mm German Mauser pistol.

Patler was arrested a half

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hour later, about a mile from the scene.

Rockwell was murdered moments after putting some clothes into a coin-operated washing machine. He had driven to the self-service laundry from the national headquarters of the party, a rundown mansion less than half a mile away.

When prosecutor William J. Hassan asked for the death penalty in his summation for the jury, Patler's 23-year-old wife, Alice, shrieked "No!"

**ESCORTED FROM** the room, she was briefly treated at a hospital and released. She was not present when the verdict was read.

Patler was a captain in the American Nazi Party but was expelled from the hate group after he differed with Rockwell on policy.

One party member, Christopher Vidnjevich of Chicago, testified that Patler had commented several times before the slaying: "Rockwell is an evil genius and must be stopped."

Patler's attorneys argued he could not have known Rockwell's movements on the day of the shooting. They said he was nowhere near the shopping center when the slaying occurred.

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## Slayer of Rockwell Guilty And Will Get 20-Year Term

ARLINGTON, Va., Dec. 16 (UPI)—John Patler, a former member of the American Nazi party, will be sentenced to 20 years in prison Monday for the sniper slaying of the party chief, George Lincoln Rockwell, last Aug. 25.

An Arlington County Circuit Court jury of 10 men and two women found Patler, 29 years old, guilty of first-degree mur-

der early Saturday after deliberating 3 hours 40 minutes.

The prosecutor, Commonwealth Attorney William Hassan, had urged the death penalty, but the panel recommended the 20-year term. Juries set the sentences in Virginia.

Judge Charles Russell delayed sentencing until Monday, and Patler's attorney Thomas Harrigan, said he would file an appeal then.

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