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5 Ex-Klansmen Convicted in School Bus Bomb Plot

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DETROIT, May 21—Five formore members of the Ku Klux Klan were convicted in United States District Court here today of plotting to bomb school buses in nearby Pontiac during the height of a busing controversy there nearly two years ago.

Ten buses belonging to the Pontiac school system were destroyed by dynamite on the night of Aug. 30, 1971, just days before a court-ordered plan to bus children across town to achieve racial integration went into effect.

Six klansmen were arrested in connection with the bombing about a week after it took place. A Federal grand jury subsequently indicted five of the six. Today, United States District Judge Lawrence Gubow found all five guilty of conspiracy. The defendants had waived a jury trial.

Those convicted were Robert Miles, 48 years old, formerly the Grand Dragon of the Klan in Michigan; and Wallace Fruit. Alex Distel Jr., Raymond Quick and Dennis Ramsey, all in their twenties and thirties and all of them klansmen at the time of the bombings. The five defendants were residents of small towns near Pontiac in 1971.

Each of the defendants faces a jail term of up to 10 years or a fine of up to $10,000, or both. Judge Gubow delayed sentencing pending the completion of probation reports. All five men are free on $10,000 bond. The defendants' attorney, James Wells, said the convictions would be appealed.

Technically, the men were found guilty of conspiring to interfere by force with the execution of the court-ordered desegregation plan and of conspiring to frighten Pontiac schoolchildren into giving up their federally guaranteed right to attend school without regard to race or color.

The men could be tried for the actual bombing only in state courts, and no charges have been lodged there.

In effect, if not in law, Judge Gubow convicted the defendants of the bombing as well as the conspiracy. "This reprehensible act if destruction was the fruit of a conspiracy entered into by these defendants," the judgesaid in pronouncing the verdict.

The bombing of the buses took place while the vehicles were parked in a city lot. No injuries resulted.

Judge Gubow based his verdict largely on the testimony of a paid informant who had infiltrated the klan for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. During a three-and-a-half-week trial that ended two weeks ago, the informant, Jerome Lauinger, testified that the defendants were members of a supermilitant wing of the klan called the Rangers.

Mr. Lauinger testified that th Pontiac bombing had been planned at secret meetings during July and August of 1971, and that he was in on the conspiracy.

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