

Six War Foes Indicted in a Plot To Disrupt G.O.P. Convention

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla., July 14.—Six national leaders of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War were indicted today on charges that they had conspired to disrupt the Republican National Convention next month with firebombs and shootings. As the six were jailed under \$25,000 bonds, other leaders from the 20,000-member anti-war group began flying into Tallahassee to plan demonstrations.

Mike Oliver, a coordinator from San Francisco, said that 200 or more members of the militant group would be in the Florida capital and that demonstrations could easily turn violent.

Late this afternoon, extra city policemen were assigned to help government security forces guard the three-story stone post office building that also houses the office of the United States Marshal and the Federal District Court.

In the indictments voted last night by a Federal grand jury but not served until this morning, the Government accused the six veterans of conspiring

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last April 1 to cause death and destruction during the Republican convention.

The weapons to be used, the Government said, included bombs, cross bows, automatic weapons and wrist rocket slingshots — rubber-thonged devices that can propel projectiles accurately for up to 100 yards.

Charges Held 'Political'

Spokesmen for the veterans group said that the charges were "political" and said that they were based on information provided by informers for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. They said the informers had acted as provocateurs.

The charges against the six Vietnam veterans were brought under the law used in charging the Chicago Seven after the Democratic convention in 1968. The Chicago trial was the first prosecution under the 1968 Civil Rights Act's antiriot provisions, which prohibit the crossing of state lines to provoke disorders.

Although neither the United

States Attorney for the Northern Florida District, William H. Stafford, nor Guy Goodwin of the Justice Department, would discuss the case, the Government considers Scott Camil, 25 years old, the leader of the "conspiracy."

Mr. Camil, who lives at Gainesville, Fla., was accused of teaching other members of the veterans group how to "use and make incendiary devices" while "knowing and intending" that the devices would cause injuries and death.

The Government contends that a "bomb school" was held May 27 at Gainesville and was attended by William J. Patterson of El Paso, Tex., Peter P. Mahoney of New Orleans, Robert Wayne Beverly of Austin, Tex., and others.

Mr. Camil and Mr. Patterson and Mr. Mahoney, who is currently a member of the V.V.A.W. national staff in New York City, were among the six who were indicted. The others were Donald P. Perdue of Fort Lauderdale, John W. Kniffin of Austin, and Alton C. Foss of Miami.

Mr. Foss was arrested in Miami today, the others were seized in Tallahassee.

Mr. Beverly was also accused in the indictment of being part of the conspiracy, along with John V. Chambers, and Charles Becker, but they were not charged.

Mr. Chambers and Mr. Beverly and two other V.V.A.W. officials were jailed in Tallahassee last night because they refused to testify before the grand jury.

Federal District Judge David L. Middlebrooks ordered them held in jail until they agreed to testify or until the current grand jury is dissolved. The judge said that this could be as long as 18 months.

In the indictments, the Government said:

"It was part of the said conspiracy that the defendants and individual coconspirators would organize numerous 'fire teams' to attack with automatic weapons, fire and incendiary devices police stations, police cars, and stores in Miami Beach, Fla., on various dates between Aug. 21 and 24, 1972; that the defendants and the individual coconspirators would fire the lead weights, 'fried' marbles, ball bearings, 'cherry' bombs and smoke bombs at police in Miami Beach . . . by means of wrist rocket slingshots and cross bows; that the defendants would disrupt communication systems in Miami Beach . . ."

The Government said that there had been at least four

meetings to plan to disrupt the Republican Convention. These were said to have been on the following dates:

April 1, when the conspiracy was allegedly hatched.

May 27 and 28, at Gainesville, Fla., where Mr. Camil allegedly demonstrated how to use the slingshots and how to make bombs, and Mr. Kniffin taught how to use cross bows.

June 24, in Dade County, Fla., where Mr. Camil was said to have once again demonstrated how to use slingshots and he and Mr. Foss allegedly showed a map "designating locations for fire bombings."

June 21, in Hialeah, a suburb of Miami.

The Government said that Mr. Camil received a shipment of eight cases of wrist rocket sling shots on July 1.

Camil Faces Other Trials

Mr. Camil had been scheduled to go on trial at Gainesville today on a marijuana charge. He also faces trial in state court on a charge of kidnapping in a family dispute over child custody.

V.V.A.W. spokesmen said that the whole Government case was "fabricated from the ravings of a mad man."

Donald C. Donnell of Fayetteville, Ark., a regional coordinator for the veterans group said that a member, William Leamer had acknowledged that he was an informer for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mr. Donnell said that it was Mr. Leamer who had proposed to cause violence at Miami Beach, not the indicted V.V.A.W. leaders.

Mr. Leamer, who testified before the grand jury in Tallahassee on July 7, could not be reached for comment. The Government is keeping his whereabouts secret.

Lawyers for the veterans group said that they believed there were other F.B.I. informers in the organization and asked Mr. Goodwin, a Justice Department attorney who specializes in internal security cases if any of the 23 V.V.A.W. leaders who were subpoenaed before the grand jury in Tallahassee were informers.

Mr. Goodwin said that to his knowledge none were. He also denied that the Government had gathered information against the veterans group through electronic surveillance.

Mr. Camil was indicted on three counts: the conspiracy charge, manufacturing and possessing a firebomb and instructing others on how to use explosives.

If convicted on all three counts, Mr. Camil could be sent to prison for 20 years and fined \$30,000. The five others, indicted only on the conspiracy charge, could receive a maximum of five years and a \$10,000 fine.

No date has been set for the arraignments, which will be in Gainesville.