

THE

# 3 Mississippi Whites Held in Alleged

By ROY REED

Special to The New York Times

FAYETTE, Miss., Sept. 10— Three white men, including an associate of a candidate for Governor, have been arrested in what the authorities here describe as a plot to assassinate Charles Evers, Fayette's first Negro Mayor.

Mr. Evers said the plot was foiled last night by a series of telephone tips from white callers.

One of the arrested men is Pat Massengale, about 50 years old, of Hattiesburg. He was campaign manager for Jimmy Swan, a Hattiesburg radio personality who ran unsuccessfully for Governor on a segregationist platform in 1967. Mr. Swan is considered a likely candidate for the 1971 Governor's race.

Mr. Massengale was charged today with illegally transferring a .45-caliber Thompson sub-machine gun to another person. He was arrested by Federal Treasury Department agents.

Mr. Massengale was indicted several months ago for jury tampering in the murder trial

of Ku Klux Klansmen charged with murdering Vernon Dahmer, a Negro leader of Hattiesburg. In his own trial Mr. Massengale was the beneficiary of a hung jury.

Also under arrest are Dale Walton of Tupelo, a grocer and head of a small and perhaps defunct Ku Klux Klan group known as the Knights of the Green Forest; and Bobby D. Haywood, 18, also of Tupelo, described as a friend of Mr. Walton's.

### Guns Found in Car

Mr. Walton was arrested by Fayette's Negro police chief and a second Negro officer after he drove past Mayor Evers on a Fayette street last night. Mr. Evers said the police had found six guns in the car.

The Mayor said Mr. Walton would be charged with conspiracy to commit murder, illegal possession of firearms and speeding.

Mr. Haywood was arrested in Natchez, 22 miles west of here, later in the evening. Agents of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Division of the Treasury Department charged him today

with violating the 1968 Gun Control Act by illegally possessing a gun — the submachine gun registered under Mr. Massengale's name.

The Federal agents also charged Mr. Walton with the same Federal violation, saying they had reason to believe that he had had "custody and control" of the same weapon.

### Reconstruction Recalled

The Federal Bureau of Investigation also is investigating. Mayor Evers said he believed several other persons were involved.

He said the event was reminiscent of the Reconstruction after the Civil War, in which white night riders terrorized Negroes who gained political power.

"Some of them just can't stand it," he said in an interview in the Mayor's office today. "As soon as black people get power, they try to kill you."

Mr. Massengale was released under \$1,000 bond this afternoon by a United States Commissioner in Hattiesburg.

Mr. Haywood was scheduled for a similar hearing later and

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## Plot to Assassinate Evers

the Fayette authorities planned to bring state charges against him if he were released on bond.

Violation of the Federal gun law is punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Mr. Walton is in the Jefferson County jail in the custody of white officials who still control the county government.

There is friction between the white county officials and the Negroes who control the City Council and the Mayor's office.

Fearful that the white sheriff will release Mr. Walton, Mayor Evers had his policemen remove a rear wheel from Mr. Walton's 1968 Mustang to keep him from leaving town unexpectedly.

The Federal treasury agents confiscated the car late today.

Mr. Evers refused to turn Mr. Walton over to the same agents until he and the city officials had had a chance to bring him to trial. The trial may come tomorrow.

Explaining his refusal in a telephone conversation with a Federal agent, Mayor Evers said:

"A rat in the cat is better than one running loose."

Newsmen were permitted to see Mr. Walton in the county jail. He smiled and chatted but declined to discuss his case.

Mayor Evers said he was warned by three anonymous white telephone callers yesterday that someone would try to kill him.

He said the first caller, a woman, telephoned the Mayor's office about 1 P.M. He said she told him that "they" had intended to kill him Monday during the moving of a controversial marble memorial to Mr. Evers's late brother, Medgar who was killed in ambush in 1963.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had placed the memorial in a small park in the middle of the town, next to a Confederate memorial, on July 4. The county government subsequently ordered it removed.

The memorial was to have been moved Monday, but it was not moved until yesterday morning. It now sits in front of the Mayor's office.