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Dying Klansman's Confession

Ann Arbor, Mich.

A Ku Klux Klansman, stricken with terminal leukemia, held a deathbed news conference yesterday and said he bombed ten school buses in Pontiac in August, 1971.

Elmer Tackett, 54, said he set and lit dynamite fuses that destroyed the buses the day before a court-ordered school desegregation busing plan was to go into effect.

Tackett, a motel manager,

held the news conference in his room at the University of Michigan Hospital at the urging of his attorney.

He admitted being a member of the Ku Klux Klan at the time of the bombing.

Five other men were convicted in federal court last year of conspiracy to bomb the buses. All are serving prison sentences.

Tackett, a Kentucky-born former coal miner, said doctors have given him two

weeks to live. He said he made the statement about the bombing "to clear my conscience."

He said the five convicted men did not participate in the actual bombing. "There was only one man who had anything to do with the bombing — that was me," he said.

Tackett said he bombed the buses because he opposes school busing, adding, "I would do it a dozen times."

The bus bombing came during a year of protests by whites in Pontiac over the school integration plan.

U.S. Attorney Ralph Guy said in Detroit yesterday his office and the FBI will investigate Tackett's statement before deciding whether to bring charges against him. He added that Tackett's life expectancy could have a bearing on the decision.

Associated Press