

# Convention Violence 'Plot' Is Described By Informer

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—The Government's key informer testified today that an antiwar veteran charged with plotting to disrupt the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach in 1972 told him he had organized "political assassination squads" armed by trading drugs for guns.

William W. Lemmer, the informer, said that Scott Camil, one of seven members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and a supporter who are on trial here, told him the scheme was named "Phoenix II" after a Central Intelligence Agency-sponsored assassination project in Vietnam. He quoted Mr. Camil as saying that training sessions had been carried out on an isolated farm with facilities for "rifle, pistol and mortar" practice.

Defense attorneys called for a mistrial, contending that the testimony was "inflammatory and prejudicial" and that nowhere in the indictment were political assassination, drugs or mortars mentioned. Their motion was denied by Federal District Judge Winston E. Arnov.

The eight defendants are charged with plotting an assault with automatic weapons, crossbows and slingshots on the Republican convention.

## Homemade Weapons

Mr. Lemmer described the May 27, 1972, meeting at Mr. Camil's house that forms the heart of the Government's indictment. He said the gathering was an attic huddle, guarded by walkie-talkie-carrying security men at which homemade weapons were displayed or demonstrated. He said these ranged from fishline bolos to trip police horses to fire bombs made from drugstore chemicals and hand grenades manufactured from cherry-bomb firecrackers.

He testified that one defendant, John W. Kniffen, fired a shaft from a crossbow through 6 to 8 inches of wood, and others present tested slingshots by firing a smoke bomb barrage at the Young Americans for Freedom house across the street. At one point, he said, Mr. Camil whipped a derringer out of an old sock and, without further explanation, fired a round through a stack of newspapers.

It was at this meeting, Mr. Lemmer said, that after telephone calls from other veterans, he was unmasked as an F.B.I. informer, or what he then termed a "political monitor."

He offered to become a double agent, he testified, and Mr. Camil promptly volunteered to work for the Central Intelligence Agency under the code name "Red Ragon" to pay off \$14,000 in legal debts.

Mr. Camil, he testified, had earlier turned "thumbs down" on a plan from the national veterans organization office for a security force of 300 veterans "fully equipped with shields, helmets, baseball-type chest protectors and 8-foot staffs with a noose on the end" to interpose themselves between nonviolent and violent demonstrators.

Instead, Mr. Lemmer said that Mr. Camil's own "contingency plan" called for his three-to-five-man "fire teams" armed with M-1 carbines to attack 150 police substations and shoot up the transformers on power poles to cut off electricity to the convention.

He said the veterans had worked out a telephone code system in which the word "uncle" indicated matters of utmost importance and security precautions and "grandmother" the least.

Although he had been identified as what he said the veterans termed a "super-pig who must be dealt with" in some unexplained fashion, the 25-year-old former paratrooper

testified, Mr. Camil nonetheless took him on a trip after the weekend meeting to the Miami area. There, he said, he was shown color-coated maps identifying police substations and power plants and the depth of the coastal waters at the home of Alton Foss, a defendant, and heard Mr. Camil attempting to get in touch with right-wing Cuban groups.

After a courtroom wrangle at the end of the day, Judge Arnov, reversing an earlier ruling, ordered the prosecutors to turn over grand jury transcripts to the defense.

As outlined by Jack Carrouth, the chief prosecutor, in his opening statement, some of the conspirators were to shoot high-powered slingshots—capable, he said, of being "concealed in their groins or at the ankles of bell-bottom trousers"—at the police, thus inciting them to attack peaceful demonstrators at Miami Beach. Then, he said, other plotters were to attack "buildings, stores, police cars and what have you" in the city of Miami with automatic weapons and homemade fire bombs to lure the police across the bay from the beach.

Mr. Lemmer, a stocky man with a walrus mustache, took the stand late this morning. During the period that he was an informer for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, he was known by other members of the antiwar veterans' group as one of the organization's more militant and vociferous members.

Frequently drawing deeply, clearly audible breaths, he testified that he joined the organization in Atlanta on Aug. 2, 1971, while still serving at Fort Benning, Ga. He said that he participated in various activities on weekend leaves, and took a petition with 112 signatures protesting the war to a Congressional subcommittee hearing in Washington.

## Went to F.B.I.

After his discharge, he said, he returned to his home in Texarkana, Ark. Then he said he went to Fayetteville where, enrolled at the University of Arkansas, he met Martin Jordan, the state coordinator for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War.



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William W. Lemmer, who testified at trial yesterday in Gainesville, Fla., as he appeared at an antiwar demonstration some time ago in Arkansas.

Early in the fall of 1971, he said, he went to the offices of the F.B.I. there to complain that veterans were having difficulty getting a police escort to accompany a planned march.

Asked by Mr. Carrouth if he had made any further arrangements with the F.B.I., Mr. Lemmer said, "I'd be willing to work with them on any problems that might arise out of our activities."

At a meeting in Kansas City in that November, he testified, Mr. Camil told him he was "conducting training operations on a farm for political assassination squads to be used if it became necessary."

At a meeting of the veterans' group last February in Boulder, Colo., Mr. Lemmer testified that Mr. Camil said his organization was broken down into "fire teams." He said he had asked Mr. Camil how he supplied his people.

"He said he had a good operation going where he traded dope"—At this point the defense lawyers jumped up with objections and the jurors were ushered out of the courtroom before Mr. Lemmer concluded—"trading dope for guns to supply his fire teams."

Earlier today, Don Barrett, the proprietor of a cowboy wear and gun store here called the Rancher, testified that Mr. Camil had asked him the wholesale price of cartons of .30-caliber ammunition and had bought a plastic bag of metal balls. The F.B.I. later bought a similar bag of the ammunition, he said.