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Nov. 3 What The Grand Jury Ignored

By J.M. Lavelle,
David J. Garrow and
Katherine Fulton

GREENSBORO / Many people here agree with their mayor.

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But though the recent federal charges signify a new phase of the anguished aftermath of the shootings, they do not mark its end. In fact, they may only represent the end of the beginning.

In the first incarnation of the Nov. 3 story, the victims and survivors of the shootings shouldered much of the blame for what happened. A state jury came to believe that six accused Klansmen and Nazis acted in self-defense, and acquitted them of murder. CWP members had refused to testify at the state murder trial.

In what is now the story's second incarnation, police informant Ed Dawson receives much of the blame for the shootings. Dawson was among the nine present or former members of the Klan or the American Nazi Party indicted on the federal conspiracy charges. And he has been the focus of the two major journalistic investigations conducted to date—The Institute

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Bingo on the reservation

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me to Cherokee Bingo, r on the U.S. bingo cir- e, the sign out front ad- a \$50,000 jackpot, ex- times the amount al- North Carolina law for vening of bingo. But the nd their customers are king the law; tribal sov- and federal law now go outside the purview l and state regulations. half-dozen Indian reser- across the nation, high- go now goes on regu- unregulated. It's a re- omenon, so recent that rtment of Interior is still

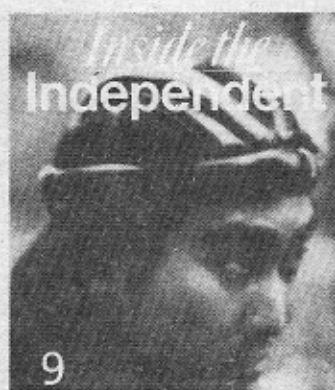
studying the possibility of regu- lating it.

North Carolina's Cherokee Bingo—with \$225,000 in winnings guaranteed each time the doors open—is the largest of them all. Now played twice a month, the bingo game will run five days a week starting in June, promoters say. And on July 2, the Cherokee will host a \$1 mil-

lion game sporting a \$200,000 grand prize.

The game is played in a huge airy hall on U.S. 19 that holds up to 4,500 players. They pay \$50 a head for the chance to win \$5,000 in each of 20 games. Another \$15 buys them the chance to win from \$7,500 to \$50,000 in four jackpots.

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FOR PEAT'S SAKE

Fishermen fight a \$541 million energy plant planned for a site near Swan Quarter. **3**

ROAD FOOD

The fast-food weary traveler's guide to authentic homegrown cooking hot off the highway. **17**

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Is tobacco leading North Carolina into a familiar trap, to haunt us in years to come? **23**

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for Southern Studies' report, "The Third of November," and the Public Broadcasting Service's television documentary, "88 Seconds in Greensboro."

But neither of these explanations discloses the full truth about why five people died. The truth, if it ever comes out, will have to take into account the role of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies:

- Did government involvement push the events of Nov. 3 in a far more deadly direction than they otherwise would have gone?

- Did official negligence or incompetence—Keystone Cops conduct—then allow for an unintended human tragedy?

- Should both federal and local law enforcement officials now share some of the responsibility for what happened on Nov. 3?

Questions such as these have rarely been asked, much less answered. It's not hard to understand why. Few people—not Mayor Forbis, not other public officials, not the media—give any credence to the CWP's grandiose claim that a high-level government conspiracy was responsible for the killings. As a result, the less grandiose but legitimate questions about government involvement have been overlooked.

Political surveillance by government agents need not be a malicious conspiracy in order to influence events—even unintentionally—along a tragic course. The case of Gary Thomas Rowe has illustrated that.

Rowe, a long-time Alabama FBI infor-

their pursuit of a special prosecutor for the case; the PBS documentary; the Institute for Southern Studies report; interviews with law enforcement officials; the available government reports; and numerous newspaper articles about every aspect of the case from Nov. 3 to the present. (The state courts have never produced a complete transcript of the murder trial; newspaper articles provide the only written record of it.)

Were local law enforcement authorities seriously negligent on Nov. 3?

Up until now, the most obvious questions and some of the most specific criticism have focused on the uniformed forces of the Greensboro Police Department. Except where otherwise noted, the factual account here is based on the police department's report about the incident. The report, however, did not explicitly discuss Dawson; police have refused to comment about his role, citing the pending litigation.

Though they had known for days that the CWP anti-Klan parade would take place that Saturday morning, and that militant Klan units were intending to harass the demonstrators, the police preparations for the upcoming confrontation left much to be desired.

The CWP's public announcements said that the morning's events would get un-

before 11 a.m. eight blocks away at Morningside Homes, a housing project, as the official parade permit specified.

Thus doubly wrong, the officers in charge told the 17 tactical squad officers assigned to the protest that they could take an early lunch break until 11:30.

While the uniformed Greensboro police were badly confused about the protest plans, paid police informant and Klan leader Ed Dawson says he assumed the march would start at 11 a.m., as the CWP announced.

As dozens of armed racists gathered at their Greensboro rendezvous point, Dawson slipped away twice to call his Greensboro police contact, Detective Jerry "Rooster" Cooper. Dawson informed Cooper that the group was heavily armed and predicted "trouble" at the end of the march, he told *The Independent*.

Cooper attended the 10 a.m. police planning meeting and told the command officers to be ready for an armed confrontation, according to the official police report about Nov. 3. The police report does not say whether the command officers warned the uniformed officers that the Klan and Nazis were definitely armed.

Shortly after 11 a.m., Dawson told his colleagues it was time to get moving. Eight vehicles containing some three dozen individuals formed a convoy with Dawson and an old friend, James Buck, in the lead pickup truck.

One car of Winston-Salem Nazis—a blue Ford Fairlane that had a cache of guns locked in its trunk—arrived late and joined the caravan on its way to the

Greensboro police commanders learned at 11:16 that the Klansmen were only moments away from the CWP protesters. But their own officers, still busy at lunch, were not yet headed for the scene.

Six minutes later—at 11:22—the Klansmen's cars pulled into the midst of the anti-Klan demonstrators. Shouts filled the air. Anti-Klan demonstrators banged Klan cars with sticks. Then Klansmen got sticks. Then shots were fired.

About 60 seconds after the Klan caravan had arrived, Detective Cooper, who had been trailing it, radioed headquarters that gunfire had broken out.

Moments later five anti-Klan activists were dead or dying, and six other demonstrators, a television cameraman and a Klansman were injured. The first uniformed policemen didn't arrive on the scene until two minutes after the shooting started.

Dawson says that the violence would have been averted if uniformed policemen had been on the scene. "When there's a Christmas parade, they're wall to wall," he said recently. "I just took for granted there were going to be a load of cops."

The three official investigations into police performance stop short of Dawson's conclusion.

The police department's own report concluded that "planning and preparation . . . were adequate and proper." It blames most of the problems on the CWP's time and location discrepancies, and adds, "the police officers assigned to the march performed their duties in a professional and legal manner."

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Political surveillance by government agents need not be a malicious conspiracy in order to influence events—even unintentionally—along a tragic course. The case of Gary Thomas Rowe has illustrated that.

Rowe, a long-time Alabama FBI informant, has indicated before Congress and in his own autobiography that he played a major role in several of the most infamous instances of racist violence during the 1960s. Violent by temperament, Rowe's predilections were little restrained by his FBI handlers.

Ed Dawson may not be Gary Thomas Rowe. But Dawson has said repeatedly that the Greensboro police department encouraged him to reinvolve himself in Klan activities. Nazis have said repeatedly that Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms undercover agent Bernard Butkovich promoted the use of arms on Nov. 3. And there are suspicions that other still-unidentified informants—in the Klan, in the Nazis or in the CWP—played a role in the shootings.

Yet the indictments that came out of the federal grand jury don't mention Dawson's ties to Greensboro police, nor do they raise other questions about government involvement. Federal prosecutors have said that they looked into the various charges about official complicity and found them groundless.

What follows is a summary of these issues, which range from possible negligence to instigation to conflicts of interest.

This analysis is based upon a multitude of sources, including a lengthy interview with Dawson conducted by *The Independent* on April 24; the federal indictments themselves; sworn statements given to Greensboro Justice Fund attorneys in

the CWP anti-Klan parade would take place that Saturday morning, and that militant Klan units were intending to harass the demonstrators, the police preparations for the upcoming confrontation left much to be desired.

The CWP's public announcements said that the morning's events would get underway at 11 a.m. But at a 10 a.m. planning meeting, police ignored the public information and focused solely on the 12 noon kickoff time stated on the official parade permit.

At the same time, police understood that the kickoff would take place at the Windsor Community Center and had units near the location. But the bulk of the anti-Klan protestors, along with several television news crews, gathered shortly

colleagues it was time to get moving. Eight vehicles containing some three dozen individuals formed a convoy with Dawson and an old friend, James Buck, in the lead pickup truck.

One car of Winston-Salem Nazis—a blue Ford Fairlane that had a cache of guns locked in its trunk—arrived late and joined the caravan on its way to the protest scene. Detective Cooper, accompanied by a police cameraman, maintained discreet surveillance of the group, but not until 11:13 did he radio police headquarters that the procession was on its way, according to the police report.

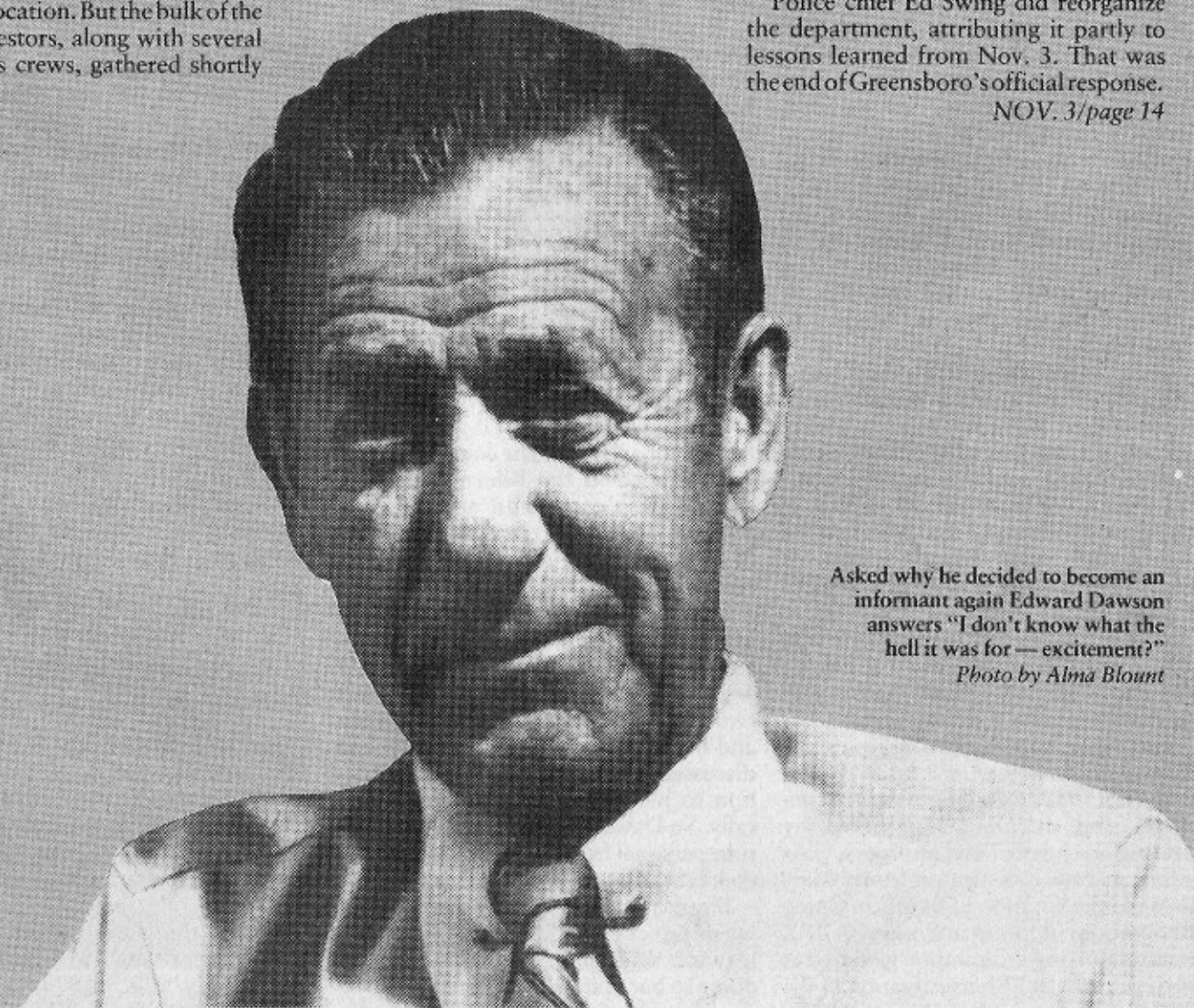
son's conclusion.

The police department's own report concluded that "planning and preparation . . . were adequate and proper." It blames most of the problems on the CWP's time and location discrepancies, and adds, "the police officers assigned to the march performed their duties in a professional and legal manner."

Two other reports—one by the city's Human Relations Commission and the other by city-employed consultants—cited weaknesses in police performance and recommended procedural and administrative changes within the department.

Police chief Ed Swing did reorganize the department, attributing it partly to lessons learned from Nov. 3. That was the end of Greensboro's official response.

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Asked why he decided to become an informant again Edward Dawson answers "I don't know what the hell it was for — excitement?"

Photo by Alma Blount

November 3

Continued from page 13

To be sure, there's no indication to date that the police commanders or Cooper intended to encourage violence. But while incompetence and bad luck are not necessarily illegal, incomplete and mismanaged communications between all the parties clearly contributed to the tragedy.

Did the FBI fail to act in the light of its own information about the pending confrontation?

The story of FBI involvement, or lack of it, in the Nov. 3 confrontation begins with a familiar voice — that of police informant Dawson.

Dawson had worked extensively as an FBI informant and as an informal source for Greensboro police from the late 1960s until the mid-1970s. He had reinvented himself in his old-time surveillance activities in mid-September 1979 at the request of Cooper and a fellow police detective, he said in his recent interview with *The Independent*.

According to Dawson this is what happened:

Out of Klan and informant work for almost three years, Dawson was asked by Cooper to attend and report on a meeting of the Revolutionary Communist Party in exchange for \$25.

Before agreeing to attend, Dawson checked with an old FBI friend, Leonard Bogarty.

Soon after Dawson attended the RCP meeting, the city detectives called on his

One month later Glass received a form letter signed by Charlotte Special Agent in Charge Robert L. Pence.

The letter said that such information on the CWP "had been previously reported to FBI headquarters in Washington," indicating that one or more reports did indeed exist.

Two months later, another form letter was sent to Glass by Justice Department officials. This letter said that, due to 5 U.S. Code 552(b)(7)(A), which addressed FBI investigative records gathered for law enforcement purposes, sending the material to Glass would "interfere with law enforcement proceedings." Again, the reply confirmed the existence of some pertinent documents.

Neither Pence nor Pelczar would comment in recent days when asked to clear up the confusion about the FBI investigation. Both cited the pending litigation, and Pelczar added, "Maybe I can talk about it sometime but not now."

The FBI statements and the replies to the FOIA inquiries help establish the credibility of an older piece of information. Cannon Mills worker Daisy Crawford, a friend of Nov. 3 shooting victim Sandra Smith, was visited one day in late October 1979 by men who flashed what she thought to be FBI identification.

The men showed Crawford a picture of a black woman and some unidentified white men. Crawford identified the picture of Sandra Smith, but refused any further cooperation when the men would not explain the reason for the visit.

"Feeling very frightened about the implications of the visit," Crawford says in

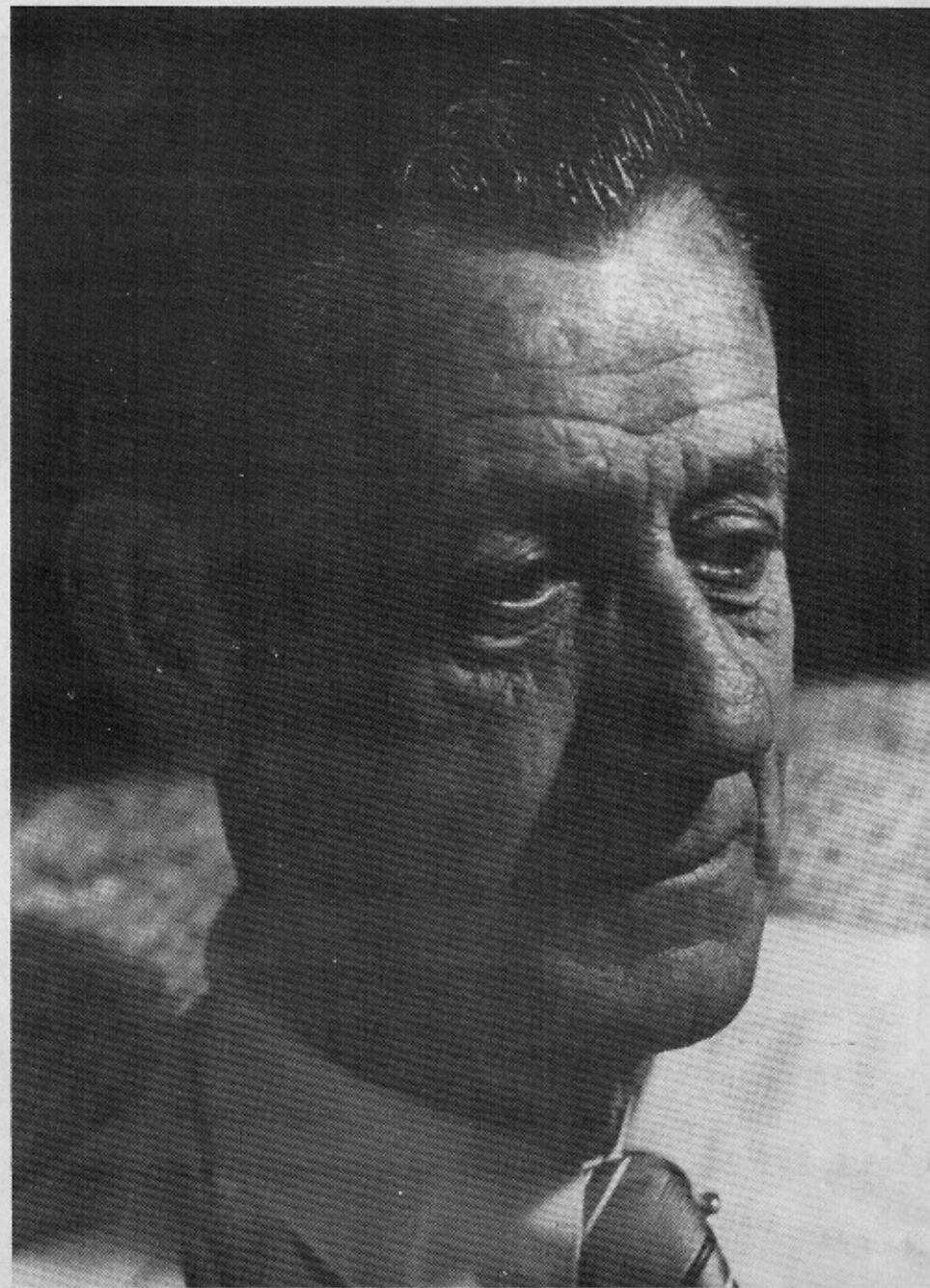


Photo by Alma Blount

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Before agreeing to attend, Dawson checked with an old FBI friend, Leonard Bogarty.

Soon after Dawson attended the RCP meeting, the city detectives called on his services again. This time they asked him to find out whether Klan leaders were planning to attend a newly-announced "communist" march scheduled for Nov. 3. Dawson spoke with Klan leader Virgil Griffin, who told him about plans to attend the "Death to the Klan" rally.

Soon Dawson began to suspect that the communists planning the Nov. 3 rally were not the RCP. On Monday, Oct. 22, Dawson's suspicions were dismissed by the two city detectives. Still puzzled, Dawson called his FBI friend Bogarty, who has refused to comment on Dawson's version of what happened. Transferred to a different agent, Dawson said he found himself having to inform the FBI man about the different communist groups. "Goddam, these people are dumb," Dawson says he thought to himself.

The next day, apparently, the Greensboro FBI office launched its own formal probe of the CWP.

Soon after the shooting, FBI field agent Andrew Pelczar said that the FBI investigated the CWP from Oct. 23 to Nov. 2. The reason for this, he said, was that the organization made frequent statements supporting "the use of violence to achieve its goals."

Pelczar's superiors in Charlotte and Washington, however, said that Pelczar was mistaken, and insisted that no pre-Nov. 3 investigation had occurred.

But other information indicates the FBI was active in the CWP case.

In April 1982, according to sworn statements and documents gathered by Greensboro Justice Fund attorneys, California private investigator Murv Glass wrote to the Charlotte FBI office. Citing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), he asked for any information gathered as the result of any FBI investigation of the CWP between Oct. 11 and Nov. 2, 1979.

a black woman and some unidentified white men. Crawford identified the picture of Sandra Smith, but refused any further cooperation when the men would not explain the reason for the visit.

"Feeling very frightened about the implications of the visit," Crawford says in her sworn affidavit taken by Greensboro Justice Fund attorneys, she contacted Smith and cancelled plans to attend the Nov. 3 rally with her children. Crawford's testimony is corroborated by a sworn deposition form Lyn Wells, who said Crawford called her the day the alleged FBI agents visited her.

Whether or not the FBI was intensively investigating the Communist Workers Party and the pending "Death to the Klan" march, there is reason to believe that at least a few Bureau agents had reason to believe trouble was brewing.

In an interview with *The Independent*, Klan leader Joe Grady said that he warned FBI agents of a likely Klan-CWP confrontation. The warning was "really more or less an argument" in a Winston-Salem restaurant. "We all caused quite a commotion," he said.

Grady said he was trying to convince the FBI that the CWP march was a trap orchestrated by the CWP and law enforcement agencies. The communists, he argued, wanted the Klan to show up armed, kill a communist and therefore produce a black martyr to help the CWP in its organizing efforts. Grady doesn't remember the exact date of the argument.

Dawson also had contact with an FBI agent. In *The Independent's* interview, Dawson said he called his long-time FBI associate Bogarty on Nov. 1, 1979, just two days before the shootings. Dawson and his Greensboro police contacts had discussed the idea of seeking an injunction to block the "Death to the Klan" rally. So Dawson called Bogarty, a long-time personal friend as well as official FBI contact in the mid-1970s, to seek advice.

Bogarty knew that Dawson was relaying information to the police department, Dawson said, and advised him to keep doing so but to stay away from the Nov. 3 demonstration. Dawson had just had a

back operation and Bogarty was concerned he might get hurt, Dawson said.

Dawson stresses that this exchange with Bogarty was based on their personal relationship, not on any official relationship between them. They did not discuss what might happen Nov. 3, Dawson said, nor did Dawson have any knowledge of an FBI investigation. Bogarty refused to comment.

One other person says he contacted a North Carolina FBI agent prior to Nov. 3. In a sworn affidavit taken by Greensboro Justice Fund attorneys, Mordechai Levey, the leader of an activist Jewish group that monitors Klan activities, stated that he called a Jewish FBI agent in Raleigh to warn him that trouble was brewing for the Nov. 3 march.

None of this information concerning the FBI proves FBI misconduct. There will be no way to draw conclusions about the FBI's performance until the Bureau itself makes additional statements, until documents become available or until a special prosecutor is named in the case.

Was the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms acting legally in its connection with the Nazis? Did the Bureau do what it could to prevent violence?

BATF agent Bernard Butkovich was introduced to Winston-Salem Nazis by Nazi leader Harold Covington, who has disappeared from public view for the past two years.

Having thus infiltrated the Winston-Salem Nazis in July 1979, Butkovich was present Sept. 22-23, 1979, in Louisburg, N.C., when Nazis joined with two Klan

groups to found the United Racist Front (URF).

Nazi sources have said repeatedly in interviews that Butkovich attended at least one crucial Nov. 3 planning meeting and urged participants to carry weapons. Over time, they say, Butkovich goaded the Nazis to attempt illegal activities, such as assassination of rival Klan leaders, procurement of illegal weapons and use of particular bombing techniques.

Butkovich also attended at least one planning meeting when the Forsyth County Nazis were discussing their Nov. 3 plans, Raeford Milano Caudle told *The Independent*. Caudle, one of the Nazis recently indicted for conspiracy, said Butkovich told the Nazis, "Well, I wouldn't go unless I had my gun. It isn't against the law to have one locked in the car."

In an interview with the *Greensboro Daily News*, BATF officials said they were required to notify the nearest U.S. Attorney, the local state prosecutor, the FBI and the city police prior to the investigation. But these officials claimed not to have known about the BATF investigation.

Butkovich, then, seems to have known two days before the Nov. 3 shootings that trouble might be brewing, but apparently did not pass his information along to law enforcement agencies.

The BATF held an internal investigation of Butkovich and "found nothing improper" in his role as undercover agent. That report is not yet available under the Freedom of Information Act.

In Nov. 1981, BATF representatives were supposed to supply the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice with written answers to questions about Butkovich's activities. This report has still not been supplied, according to a committee spokesperson.

Photo by Alma Blount

Dawson remembers relaying the information to Detective Cooper, who said, "It must be right because the communist informant told us the same thing."

spiracy surrounding the Nov. 3 rally supposedly begins. Young Klansman Mark Sherer, who, in a surprise development, recently pleaded guilty to a conspiracy charge in the Nov. 3 case, may be the source of the government's information. But prosecutors have refused to comment on Sherer's role.

Whether or not Sherer is the source of information about the Burke County meeting, there may be other sources, some of which may be as yet undisclosed informants among the Klansmen or the Nazis.

In fact, Dawson and others believe that he was not the only government informant present on Nov. 3. In an interview about two years ago, Dawson suggested he suspected one of his colleagues of having been active as an informant.

Additionally, long after Nov. 3 one official cautioned Dawson not to be surprised or upset if it subsequently was revealed that he was not the Greensboro department's only informant inside the Klan, Dawson said in his recent interview with *The Independent*.

Some speculation about other informants focuses on the occupants of the last two heavily armed vehicles in the Klan-Nazi caravan that arrived at the shootings — the blue Ford and the yellow van.

Some of the men riding in these vehicles were the ones who unleashed the deadly barrage upon the anti-Klan protesters. If there was any direct government involvement in plans to kill CWP members, that involvement would have been based upon contact with these men, many of whom were members of the Winston-Salem Nazi unit.

Did government penetration of the Communist Workers Party provide another as yet unrevealed source on the plans leading up to Nov. 3?

Anyone knowledgeable about political surveillance in recent American history would fully expect that federal, state and local police units all would have tried and perhaps succeeded in acquiring an informant inside as radical a group as the CWP.

Although the FBI's apparent ignorance of communist politics in Greensboro suggests they had no such source, either the city police or perhaps the SBI may have had a CWP informant.

CWP leaders have privately acknowledged just such a fear, and their suspicions are supported by Klan informant Dawson. Less than three days before the Nov. 3 confrontation, Dawson told *The Independent*, he was giving information to Detective Cooper, who said, "It must be right because the communist informant told us the same thing."

It's difficult to evaluate the role of either the Greensboro police or Dawson without knowledge of the role of other informants.

Was there a conflict of interest for the Justice Department and the FBI who together ran the special

enforcement officials were involved in a conspiracy with the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi Party to violate the civil rights of the anti-Klan demonstrators on Nov. 3. The suit specifically names Justice Department and FBI officials as defendants.

In addition, Brereton also testified during the 1980 state murder trial that he had had personal financial dealings with police informant Dawson, who, of course, was indicted by the federal grand jury with which Brereton worked.

Both Dawson and Brereton said recently that these financial dealings involved payment for carpentry work Dawson performed for Brereton around 1974. Dawson also said that he never worked with Brereton in an agent-informant relationship.

Based on these circumstances, the Greensboro Justice Fund has filed a request for a special prosecutor to supervise an inquiry into the events surrounding Nov. 3. The Justice Fund argues that the FBI and the Justice Department have a clear conflict of interest in the case—ranging from possible FBI involvement pre-Nov. 3 through the special grand jury investigation.

A number of private citizens heretofore uninvolved in the Nov. 3 case are backing the call for a special prosecutor. The American Civil Liberties Union, in particular, has assumed a visible role. Federal Judge Gerhard Gesell is expected to rule on the request, which is pending in Washington, at anytime.

Regardless of the available evidence, or lack of it, about government involvement in the Nov. 3 shootings, appointment of a special prosecutor would cer-

said, "It must be right because the communist informant told us the same thing."

Butkovich was not present when the shootings took place Nov. 3 and was never called to testify in the state murder trial. He has repeatedly refused to comment about his actions as an undercover agent. He did testify to the special federal grand jury, and may be called as a witness in the upcoming federal trial.

Clearly, questions still remain about the role of Butkovich and the BATF.

Did the Greensboro Police Department or other government agencies have one or more other informants besides Dawson in the Klan or the Nazis?

The recent federal indictments mention for the first time an October Klan meeting in Burke County where the con-

about two years ago, Dawson suggested he suspected one of his colleagues of having been active as an informant.

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Again, few conclusions can be drawn because of the lack of information. The federal trial may supply more. But special attention also needs to be focused upon one government agency whose possible foreknowledge of plans for Nov. 3 has received no public investigation whatsoever: the N.C. State Bureau of Investigation (SBI).

The SBI is named as a defendant in the \$48 million civil damages suit that has been filed on behalf of the Nov. 3 survivors. The SBI's official reply to the suit — and the only public statement the agency will make about Nov. 3 — argues that the SBI cannot be sued because it is immune under federal law.

Given the SBI's monitoring of political radicals in the state, it should surprise no one if the SBI is some day revealed to have had one or more informants in Virgil Griffin's Klan, in the Winston-Salem Nazi unit or in the Klan-Nazi caravan of Nov. 3.

of communist politics in Greensboro suggests they had no such source, either the city police or perhaps the SBI may have had a CWP informant.

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It's difficult to evaluate the role of either the Greensboro police or Dawson without knowledge of the role of other informants.

Was there a conflict of interest for the Justice Department and the FBI who together ran the special grand jury investigation?


Thomas Brereton, an FBI agent specializing in white-collar crime, is the resident FBI agent who led the special federal grand jury's information-gathering team. But he is also a defendant in the \$48 million civil lawsuit filed on behalf of the Nov. 3 survivors and victims.

The suit, filed in November 1980, charges that city, state and federal law

enforced an illegal and un-

manant relationship. Based on these circumstances, the Greensboro Justice Fund has filed a request for a special prosecutor to supervise an inquiry into the events surrounding Nov. 3. The Justice Fund argues that the FBI and the Justice Department have a clear conflict of interest in the case — ranging from possible FBI involvement pre-Nov. 3 through the special grand jury investigation.

A number of private citizens heretofore uninvolved in the Nov. 3 case are backing the call for a special prosecutor. The American Civil Liberties Union, in particular, has assumed a visible role. Federal Judge Gerhard Gesell is expected to rule on the request, which is pending in Washington, at anytime.

Regardless of the available evidence, or lack of it, about government involvement in the Nov. 3 shootings, appointment of a special prosecutor would certainly help clear the air. And perhaps an independent investigation would move the Nov. 3 story into a third, and final, incarnation. 

J.M. Lavelle is a Greensboro writer and artist who has been researching the Nov. 3 case for almost a year. David J. Garrow, author of The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr., teaches political science at UNC-Chapel Hill. Katherine Fulton is the editor of The Independent.

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C L A S S I F I E D S

The Actors: The Groups

FKKKK—Federated Knights of the KKK, headed by Joe Grady; involved at China Grove, but not involved at Nov. 3.

IEKKK—Invisible Empire of the KKK, headed by Virgil Griffin; were involved in Nov. 3.

American Nazi Party—Headed by Harold Covington; involved in Nov. 3.

URF—United Racist Front, a cooperative effort of the FKKKK, the IEKKK and the Nazis to orchestrate "revenge" for China Grove incident.

CWP—The Communist Workers Party, formerly Workers Viewpoint Organization, sponsors of the Nov. 3, 1979, "Death to the Klan" rally.

GJF—Greensboro Justice Fund, the non-profit group doing legal work for the Nov. 3 survivors. Recently, the Justice Fund and the Christic Institute have merged for fundraising purposes, naming themselves jointly as the Greensboro Civil Rights Fund. The Greensboro Justice Fund still officially exists as an arm of the Civil Rights Fund.

November 3 Chronology

July 8, 1979—Confrontation between the Federated Knights KKK and the CWP at China Grove over the scheduled screening of "Birth of a Nation."

Sept. 22, 1979—Virgil Griffin (Invisible Empire KKK), Harold Covington (Nazi) and Gorrell Pierce (Federated Knights KKK) organize the United Racist Front to avenge the embarrassment at China Grove.

Oct. 4, 1979—CWP announces a "Death to the Klan" march.

Oct. 20, 1979—Invisible Empire KKK holds a Lincoln County march and rally. Greensboro police informant Dawson is featured speaker.

Oct. 22, 1979—Dawson contacts FBI to determine whether the Revolutionary Communist Party and the Communist Workers Party are separate organizations. (This is Dawson's version of what happened.)

Oct. 23, 1979—The FBI, according to Greensboro FBI agent Andrew Pelczar, begins an investigation into the CWP. His superiors later deny that such an investigation took place. On the same day, the United Racist Front holds a meeting in Winston-Salem.

Nov. 2, 1979—Griffin addresses United Racist Front people in Lincoln County, where he calls for a "show of force" Nov. 3.

Mid-December, 1979—Bobby Doctor of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights calls for an investigation.

Spring, 1980—Greensboro Justice Fund, which had begun meeting within weeks of the shootings, is officially founded to do legal work for the survivors of the shootings.

May, 1980—Greensboro Citizen's Review Committee issues a report which finds problems with the police performance.

July, 1980—Jury selection begins in state murder trial and the Greensboro Justice Fund asks for and is denied a special prosecutor.

Nov. 17, 1980—Six Klansmen and Nazis are found "not guilty" by an all-white Greensboro jury.

Nov., 1980—Greensboro Justice Fund files a \$48 million civil damages suit against state, federal and local law enforcement agencies on behalf of the CWP survivors.

Late December, 1980—Then-U.S. Attorney Mickey Michaux recommends a grand jury be convened.

Sept., 1981—After one mistrial, six Nazis are convicted of conspiracy to blow-up four locations in Greensboro in anticipation of guilty verdicts in state murder trial. Case still under appeal.

Daisy Crawford says two men identifying themselves as FBI agents visited her less than a week before the Nov. 3, 1979 shootings and asked her to identify pictures of a black woman and three white men. Crawford says she told them the black woman was Smith.

File photo by Wayne Lottinville (FocusSouth)



superiors later deny that such an investigation took place. On the same day, the United Racist Front holds a meeting in Winston-Salem.

Nov. 2, 1979 — Griffin addresses United Racist Front people in Lincoln County, where he calls for a "show of force" Nov. 3.

Nov. 3, 1979 — Five CWP members are killed just before the "Death to the Klan" rally is set to begin. The shootings occur in full view of television cameras, but with no uniformed policemen on the scene. Fifteen Klan and Nazi members are arrested.

Late December, 1980 — Then-U.S. Attorney Mickey Michaux recommends a grand jury be convened.

Sept., 1981 — After one mistrial, six Nazis are convicted of conspiracy to blow-up four locations in Greensboro in anticipation of guilty verdicts in state murder trial. Case still under appeal.

March, 1982 — A special federal grand jury is formed to investigate the shootings.

Sept., 1982 — Grand jury recesses and reconvenes only briefly during next six months. About the same time, lawyers representing the survivors of the shootings file a complaint asking for a special prosecutor to present the case to the grand jury. The request is still in court.

Late 1982 — The federal judge in the civil suit retires; no new judge appointed.

Feb., 1983 — Federal Judge Gerhard Gesell orders U.S. Justice Department to consider special prosecutor request.

April 21, 1983 — After hearing testimony from about 140 witnesses, the special federal grand jury issues indictments against police informant Dawson and eight other present and former members of the Ku Klux Klan or the American Nazi Party. Five of the six men acquitted on murder charges in the state trial are indicted by the federal grand jury on charges of conspiring to intimidate and interfere with Nov. 3 march participants.

April 22, 1983 — In Washington, attorneys representing the survivors file the final arguments for a federal special prosecutor, thereby meeting the deadline designated by the court.