

Shooting

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found inside the school, some set up as booby traps, Stone said. "It's like walking through a minefield," he said.

Classmates and Denver media identified the gunmen as Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. Police refused to identify them.

Andrew Beard, a student, said Harris and Klebold often poked fun at football players and other athletes "because they thought they could do anything they wanted, walk through life smoothly."

"Dylan said he hated the jocks, and how they could walk over people and thought they were tough," Beard said.

"They liked playing war games," said Josh Nielsen, a junior at the school. "That's all they could talk about. They played war games and they liked to re-enact World War II battles."

Explosives also were found in two cars in the school parking lot, with one bomb rigged to blow up a gas tank, Stone said. Also, the gunmen's homes were being searched, and a bomb was found in one.

Many parents had to wait anxiously for word about their children even 10 hours after the shootings.

They gathered at a nearby elementary school and answered questions from investigators, who were trying to identify the victims based on what they were wearing.

Although authorities told parents to go home and come back in the morning, some refused to leave.

At least 23 people were hospitalized, most of them with gunshot wounds. One girl suffered nine shrapnel wounds. At least 10 victims

were in critical or serious condition; one was in guarded condition.

The attack began at 11:30 a.m. The killers, wearing black ski masks, fatigues and trench coats, started firing in the parking lot and then entered the school.

They shot as they walked into the cafeteria, then walked upstairs to the library and continued firing with what were thought to be an assault rifle and two sawed-off shotguns. Bullets ricocheted off lockers as students sprinted for the exits.

"At first we thought it was fireworks, then we saw them shooting," said Jake Apoeaca, 16. "He saw us and then he started shooting at us. Then a guy in a white T-shirt threw two hand grenades on the roof. We hit the ground and then we started running."

Wade Frank, an 18-year-old senior, said he saw one of the killers shoot someone point-blank in the back with a 2-foot gun, possibly a sawed-off shotgun. "He was just casually walking," Frank said. "He wasn't in any hurry."

Dozens of students hid in classrooms before escaping with the help of police in an armored car. Others were trapped for hours while SWAT teams searched for the gunmen.

At one point, a bloodied young man dangled from a second-floor window, his right arm limp, and was helped down by two SWAT team members. His condition was not immediately known.

Since 1997, a series of school shootings around the country have led to demands for stricter laws, tighter security and closer monitoring of troubled

students. Two people were killed in an attack in Pearl, Miss., three in West Paducah, Ky., five in Jonesboro, Ark., and two in Springfield, Ore.

In Washington, President Clinton said: "Perhaps now America will wake up to the dimensions of this challenge, if it could happen in a place like Littleton."

Wes Lammers, 17, was among several Columbine High students who said the gunmen were targeting minorities and athletes at the 1,800-student high school.

Students said the killers might have been part of a group of eight to 10 students known as the Trench Coat Mafia.

Sean Kelly, 16, said Harris and several members of the Trench Coat Mafia had a video production class and made a video about guns they had. He also said that several members recently bragged about getting new guns, and that he heard members making derogatory remarks about blacks and Hispanics.

"They're really dark people," Lammers said. "There were a lot of jokes that one day they might snap or something."

For hours after the attack, wounded victims lay inside the building and police were unable to get to them because they feared that the gunmen might still be alive and holding hostages.

Outside, hundreds of officers from throughout the Denver area surrounded the school.

Teen-agers hugged parents and each other and wept and they recalled the shootings. Some students had called their parents on cellular phones from inside the building to whisper that they

were OK.

As TV images of the scene were broadcast nationwide, helicopter ambulances used a sports field as a landing pad, and officers in helmets and camouflage gear took cover behind squad cars. Students who fled the building wept and held their hands above their heads while police frisked them.

Four youths were taken in for questioning after the attack. One was led away from the school in handcuffs and three were stopped in a field near the school.

Authorities said the four were friends of the gunmen.

Josh Nielsen, a 17-year-old junior, said the attack reminded him of a violent scene in Keanu Reeves' latest movie. "One of the guys pulled open his trench coat and started shooting," he said. "It was a scene right out of the movie 'Matrix.'"

A girl who gave her name as Janine said two young men wearing black trench coats "walked down the stairs and they started shooting people. We didn't think it was real and then we saw blood." Her voice broke with anguish as she spoke.

"They were shooting people and throwing grenades and stuff," she said. "Me and my friends got to my car and drove off. ... We saw three people get shot."

They were just shooting. Then something blew up."

Columbine High is in the middle-class suburb of Littleton, population 35,000, southwest of Denver. Nearby schools were locked down after the attack, with students prohibited from entering or leaving for hours.

Baseball's Colorado Rockies and basketball's

Denver Nuggets postponed their Tuesday night games.

The Colorado Legislature has been debating a bill that would allow people to carry concealed weapons. The shootings brought reaction

from both sides. The bill's supporters said an official with a concealed gun could have stopped the tragedy; its opponents said the rampage was evidence that society is already overrun with guns.

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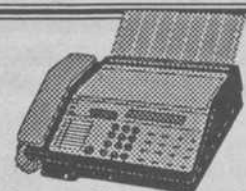
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Profiling

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reversed the state's positions in "friend of the court" briefs filed in various suits by Lungren, who argued for state rights involving the Americans With Disabilities Act and age discrimination.

Lockyer also said he had made top personnel changes to reflect the office's new emphasis.

"I maybe got a year's work just sort of cleaning up after the elephant," he said, drawing laughter from the crowd.

"There are a lot of policies at the state level we can impact — law enforcement and correctional policy," he continued. "One of the themes of this conference is to make sure that arrests, prosecutions and sentencing policies are done unencumbered by racial bias."

As part of that theme, Rev. Jamal Harrison-Bryant, the national youth and college director for the NAACP, exhorted youth at an earlier speech to continue to strive for justice.

"I was challenging the young people to assume the mantle of civil rights," Bryant said.

"As we approach the 21st century, it's important for us to forge the new vision of leadership for the association."

Bryant said the NAACP has to raise awareness of the changing face of racism, which he said is becoming more dangerous with advancements in technology.

Although there are few signs of racism, such as ordering "coloreds" to ride in the back of the bus, Bryant said racism is still reflected in the assault on affirmative action, inequities in correctional institutions and an inadequate education system.

Western Regional Conference Chairman Tony Alexander said the forum's focus has been on problems in law enforcement and education.

"We want to have people fully armed and ready to deal with the challenges of the 21st century," he said.

Women

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purchases of satellite dishes and cable services. Blacks spent \$187 million in satellite hook-ups. Computer purchases among blacks also doubled.

"African-Americans have always embraced new communications technology with heavy purchases," Smikle said.

He credits this increase in technology spending to African-Americans' desire to acquire information.

"The value we put on information is similar to the value we put on education," Smikle said. "It is a way to move ahead in society."

Moreover, he said the Internet, cable and satellites enable Blacks to research more about current culture and "see themselves."