

LAS VEGAS

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Reconstructing racist killer's mad rampage

CHICAGO (AP) — The sun set and the Sabbath had just begun as a group of Orthodox Jewish worshippers headed to synagogue. A stranger stepped out of a shiny blue Taurus. Soon, the staccato of gunfire shattered the night, bullets whizzing past one man's head.

The shooter had calmly approached a group of men and boys wearing traditional black hats and long black coats, aimed a pair of semiautomatic handguns and opened fire.

He got back into his car and slowly drove through the North Side neighborhood. He turned the corner, shooting two more men. A block south, two more. He drove on a few blocks, stopping three more times, all the time shooting from his car — shattering the glass on the passenger side.

Within 15 minutes Friday night, six Jews were wounded; one was hit in his back as he threw his young son to the ground, then covered him with his own body. The driver was gone — without uttering a word.

Soon police had a sketch: A white man in his 20s, medium build, short, dark brown hair, driving a '90s model Taurus.

The hunt was on.

It was the beginning of what police say was a three-day rampage by a white supremacist who targeted minorities in two states over the Fourth of July weekend; he is suspected of killing a black former basketball coach and a Korean graduate student.

It ended Sunday night with a third death on a quiet rural road, 235 miles south of Chicago.

This time, authorities say, the person killed was the suspected gunman — Benjamin Nathaniel Smith, 21. Smith, who had the words "Sabbath Breaker" tattooed across his chest, was well-known to authorities for distributing hate-message leaflets.

Marion County sheriff's deputies say they chased Smith after he carjacked a minivan in southern Illinois; he shot himself twice as he was pursued, they say, then a third time — in the chest — as he struggled with authorities.

"I'm glad it's over," Sheriff Gerald L. Benjamin declared Monday. "I don't know what caused (See *Reconstructing*, Page 13)



Sentinel-Voice photos by Ramon Savoy

The Reeds stand in front of their new North Las Vegas home.

Family gets new home

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

Now that some Windsor Parks residents are relocating to other areas of North Las Vegas thanks to a joint effort by the City of North Las Vegas and the Fannie Mae Foundation, that just leaves one

issue: how will the new homeowners, mostly low and fixed income residents, afford to stay in their new homes?

On Tuesday, Sen. Richard Bryan, North Las Vegas Mayor Michael Montandon, GMAC (See *Reed*, Page 3)



Elected officials stand with the Reed family.

Minorities want killing spree labeled hate crime

Shelia Washington
Chicago Defender

Reaction to the weekend shooting rampage by a lone gunman aimed at Jews, blacks and Asians has been stinging because law enforcement officials will not categorize the incident as a hate crime.

Everyone from African-American ministers to Jewish rabbis beg to differ. The deadly spree that started in Chicago, snaked downstate, over to Indiana and back to Illinois, killed and injured Jews, Blacks and Asians.

NAACP president and CEO of the national NAACP Kweisi Mfume said the shooting spree is a hate crime and should be labeled as such. "It's a sad commentary that during the weekend most of us celebrate Independence Day, Americans are shot for no apparent reason other than their race, ethnic origin and religion," Mfume said.

Benjamin Nathaniel Smith, 21, the alleged perpetrator of the violence, was once a member of the World Church of the Creator, a white supremacist group advocating a holy war against "mud races."

In an article that appeared about a year ago, Smith told Indiana University's student newspaper, "I think it's pretty clear that our

government has turned against white people."

He shot and killed former Northwestern University basketball coach Ricky Byrdsong, 43, and Indiana University student Won-Joon Yoon, 26, injured nine others and terrorized thousands. The terror ended near downstate Salem Sunday when police said Smith turned a weapon on himself.

Several community leaders, including Jewish rabbis and African-American ministers have spoken out against the shootings that targeted their respective groups, calling for peace.

"Investigators may be reluctant to call this a hate crime until they uncover more evidence, but the fact remains that all of the victims were racial or religious minorities," Mfume said. "America was built on the belief that all people, regardless of race, ethnic background or religion, have the right to the pursuit of happiness and we should not let a few sick individuals destroy this belief."

Clarence Wood, chairman of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, said the city and the mayor "err gravely if we regard the rising toll from this and other chilling expressions of rage over American's (See *Byrdsong*, Page 3)



Sentinel-Voice photos by Kim Edwards

HAIR RAISING

The latest in hair styles was on display Sunday at the Hump the Grinders Hair Show at Bally's Hotel and Casino.

