

Prosecution To Rest in Gainesville 8 Case

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GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP) — The government has completed most of its case against the Gainesville Eight, depending in large measure on informers who told of plans to use everything from slingshots to bazookas during last summer's Republican convention.

With the case expected to reach the jury in two or three weeks, the prosecution's case against the eight members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War rests most heavily on the testimony of those informers — paid and unpaid — and police agents who infiltrated the organization.

The defense, in turn, has sought to show through cross-examination that the defendants were more concerned with warding off violence by police, that reports of rifles and other weapons were never substantiated and that some of the informers were not believable witnesses.

Seven of the defendants are accused of plotting violence in the Miami area during the GOP gathering at Miami Beach. The eighth is charged with not reporting the alleged conspiracy.

The government tentatively rested its case Friday but says it may present a few more minutes of evidence when the trial resumes Tuesday.

The prosecution called 27 witnesses, including seven informers. Some of the informers had been

friends of the defendants — at least until their mission was revealed. Some held responsible positions in the veterans group.

The key witness is William Lemmer, a chubby ex-paratrooper who said the group talked of using slingshots, other weapons and explosives to attack police cars, police stations and businesses.

Lemmer testified that the plot was hatched at a meeting in the attic of defendant Scott Camil's house during the Memorial Day Weekend in 1972.

Lemmer and Charles Henry Becker, a New Orleans policeman who turned paid FBI informer, were regional VVAW coordinators. The FBI gave them money to travel to meetings.

The defense contended that Becker, who was present at the meeting where the alleged plot took place, had a weapons charge against him dismissed after FBI intervention. Becker said he did not know if the FBI intervened after his New York City arrest for carrying an illegal gun.

Several government witnesses testified under cross-examination that the defendants said they were not going to start trouble, but planned to be able to defend themselves in case it turned into a scene like the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

The only weapons introduced into evidence

have been "wristrocket" slingshots bought by one of the eight through a boutique he managed in Gainesville.

Andrew John Gary, a former Brockton, Mass., farmer, testified that he tried to buy three carbines in Miami for Camil but couldn't because he wasn't 21. He said Camil's mother purchased them and then he brought them to Gainesville.

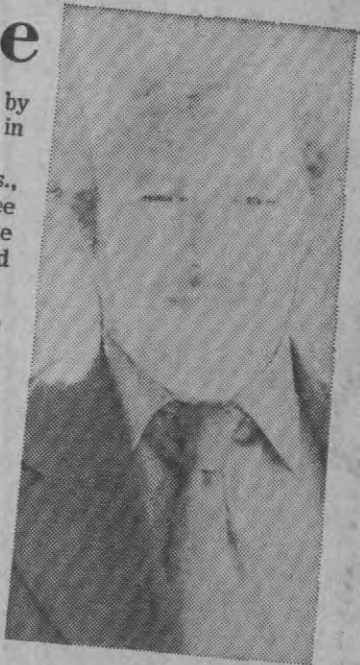
Gary said he was never told what they were to be used for but said Camil had talked about gathering supplies for a South America hunting trip.

The government contends the defendants planned to use the guns and slingshots at Miami Beach.

Cecil Yates Jr., an FBI chemical expert from Washington, testified he experimented with a chemical that Camil reportedly said could be put in police car gas tanks to blow them up.

Yates said it was possible the chemical would ignite in the tank, but not probable. He said a lighted match would have a higher degree of probability.

Some of the most potentially damaging testimony came from Sgt. Harrison Crenshaw of the Dade County Public Safety Department. Harrison also infiltrated the antiwar organization.



CHARLES H. BECKER
...paid FBI informer