

28 Oct 1974

Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300550012-9

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Hearing set for today on blood throwing

by Gwen Phillips

A hearing was scheduled earlier today for the two Mary Washington College students who allegedly threw two bags of pig's blood on a recruiter for the Central Intelligence Agency at a career day program last week. The trial is set for Nov. 4.

Stephen Galloway, a 19-year-old sophomore from Anandale, and Kevin Flatt, a 19-year-old freshman from Alexandria, were arrested Oct. 21 and released on \$500 bond. They are charged with assault, disturbing the peace and profanity in public.

The hearing was to be conducted by Prince Woodard, president of the college. The hearing is designed to establish what actually happened and what steps the college will take. A. Ray Merchant, vice-president of the college, and J. M. H. Willis Jr., legal counsel for the college were also to attend. In addition, the two suspects, their attorney and witness were to meet for the closed session. The hearing had been postponed from Friday to allow the suspects more time to prepare their case, according to Merchant.

The incident occurred Oct. 17 at 4:45 in ACL Ballroom. The two men reportedly ran into the room and threw the blood at the CIA representative and fled from the building. They were allegedly confronted on Ball circle by several students and the representative from Reynolds Metal Company of Richmond.

The blood, reportedly obtained from a slaughterhouse, splattered on the recruiter and the materials in front of him. One student in the room at the time of the incident related that she heard a splash and turned to find the recruiter splattered with blood. She noted that she thought the man had been shot.

One source reported that the CIA man does not intend to press charges. He reportedly is dismissing the incident.

The damage to the college's reputation and ability to attract recruiters for future career day programs is the most devastating aspect of the incident, noted Merchant. The intent of career day is to promote smooth relations between the businesses and students and the CIA did not want negative publicity, Merchant added. It is reported that the CIA will not return next year.

Galloway and Flatt are allegedly members of a September 11 coalition. The group is opposed to the reported CIA involvement in a coup that toppled Chilean President Salvador Allende Sept. 11, 1973. The group distributed leaflets at Career day relating the reported CIA involvement and listing "demands" to end all CIA covert activities.

Flatt remarked that he "did not regret the action," yet "feels that going to jail would be unjustified and politically repressive." They took the action, according to Galloway and Flatt, to draw attention symbolically to the political situation in Chile.

Galloway noted that "people are focusing on the act, not on the issue." He further stated that he "realized the risk prior to the event but had not anticipated the repression." Though not stating where he had intended the blood to land, Galloway noted, "It is unfortunate that it went on his (CIA representative) pants. We were protesting the organization, not the agent."

According to Steve Jackson, the general consensus of Madison dorm is "an agreement with the feelings of Galloway and Flatt about the reported CIA involvement in Chile, but bitterly opposed to the incident." "I'm concerned that many people are blaming the students in Madison for the incident and condemning them," he added.

Jackson continued, "MWC allows for peaceful protest, the distribution of literature and acknowledging disagreement through writing letters to the Bulletin." Only when these channels are cut off, he noted, does a group have the right for an argument. These two misused these opportunities, he added.

Merchant explained that he saw nothing wrong with not going along with the events of the CIA and there are some merits of an organization that exhibits a dislike. However, he emphasized, "This is a totally unexceptionable way of demonstration."

Merchant added that his initial reaction was "disgust" and "shock." He stressed that the college does intend to prosecute.

An ill conceived protest

The Bullet has not reported many of the reasons of the accused for the recent blood throwing on a representative of the CIA at Career Day. It is becoming more and more apparent just how badly the media is used by the public as a pawn for publicity. The blood throwing is a good example of this. The accused protesters probably would have liked to have seen the Bullet reprint large excerpts of a pamphlet on CIA involvement in Chile which was distributed on campus. A small, ill conceived protest such as this does not deserve that type of publicity in the Bullet.

The blood throwing was a totally irresponsible act. It is an added shame that the college was dragged into the affair. From reports, it seems there is a group on campus that is united in protest over the CIA involvement in Chile. Hopefully, any action this group takes will be constructive action.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with CIA involvement in the coup of Chilean President Salvador Allende is in no way relevant to the blood throwing. What was done was selfish — to publicize their feelings the accused trampled on the rights of a man. The rights of individuals are a two way street and there is a balance that must be realized.

The accused undertook a protest of the late '60s variety, forcing us to remember people like the Berrigan brothers. But who remembers the Berrigan brothers? People like the Berrigan brothers do not live long in our memory. However, people like Ralph Nader will. But Ralph Nader's protests have been long and hard ones.

This is not to say that injustices can always be righted by Naderian protest. Indeed, there are injustices in this world that demand action now, immediately — and this type of action can only be achieved by short term protests of serious consequences.

However, the blood throwing was done as a last resort type of protest when there were worth while options open to the accused protesters. Therefore, it seems this protest was simply a self-indulgent one and that the accused protesters were trying to achieve a romantic character for their actions.

J.M.

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