

## 911 TAPES SHOW SUSPECT SUBDUED AFTER SLAYINGS

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**Paul Harrington** was rational and knew exactly what he was doing when he shot his wife, Wanda, and his son, Brian, 3, in the head, holding the gun so close there were powder burns on the victims, prosecutors say.

He had borrowed the gun from a neighbor Oct. 14, 1999, the night before the killings, said Ralph Elizondo, assistant Wayne County prosecutor in opening arguments at **Harrington**'s first-degree murder trial Monday in Wayne County Circuit Court in Detroit.

**Harrington**, 54, made a deliberate decision to commit the murders the next morning, proving premeditation, Elizondo said. He even told a 911 operator that he sent his teenage son, **Paul Jr.**, to school because "he's too big ...I didn't want to wrestle him."

**Harrington**, who is pleading not guilty by reason of insanity, talked about 10 minutes to the 911 operator. The recorded call was played back to the jury. **Paul Jr.** is expected to testify at the trial, possibly today.

"He thought about this, he had some time to weigh it," Elizondo said.

But defense attorney W. Frederick Moore argued that although the graphic details in the crime "will disturb you to your soul," **Harrington** was legally insane.

Moore said his client experienced psychiatric instability in part from his traumatic Vietnam War experiences, when, **Harrington** told a psychiatrist years ago, he killed a Vietnamese mother and four children by mistake.

Moore said **Harrington** has been an alcoholic and heroin user and three months prior to the shootings had been involuntarily committed to a psychiatric institution. "The demons were torturing him," Moore said.

On the 911 tape made shortly after the shootings, a subdued **Harrington** pleaded with the operator to stay on the phone and fully confessed to the shootings.

"Things just wasn't working out," **Harrington** said. "Everything's just gone to hell. I just don't know what to do anymore ...I loved my kids. I loved them. I just couldn't take care of them anymore."

**Harrington** said he had mental problems and took medication, but had run out and had no money for more. He told the operator he had been hospitalized because "I was depressed, suicidal. I wanted to kill people."

**Harrington** sat almost immobile during the testimony, in front of a television upon which several photographs of the murder scene were displayed. One photo showed Wanda and Brian, both shot in the head, on opposite ends of the couch. Wanda was shot while she was sleeping. Another photograph showed blood stains in the dining room by a Hot Wheels garage and cars. **Harrington** said he shot Brian as he played with the toys and carried him to the couch and shot him again.

**Harrington** committed an almost identical crime in 1975, when he shot his wife and two daughters to death in Detroit. He was found not guilty by reason of insanity and spent two months in a psychiatric institution.

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