

JUDGE DROPS ONE SUSPECT IN OFFICER'S KILLING

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Saturday, January 16, 1999

Author: SUZETTE HACKNEY Free Press Staff Writer

Three men accused of shooting two Detroit police officers in the face with an assault rifle last month will stand trial on murder and assault charges, a judge ruled Friday.

But 36th District Judge Deborah Langston dismissed the murder charge against a fourth man, Thomas Culbreth, 20.

The ruling disappointed the families of slain Officer Shawn Bandy, 23, and wounded Officer Lloyd Todd, 34. The officers were ambushed while following a van they believed to be connected with a kidnapping Dec. 5. The shooting left Todd paralyzed and without a right eye.

"Culbreth should have been bound over like the others," said retired Sgt. Max Bandy, Shawn Bandy's father.

Added Jack Barthwell, Todd's brother-in-law: "It's important to see that justice is done and all the people responsible for this heinous crime pay for what's been done."

Langston found enough evidence to order Detroiters James Langford, 24; **Montez Moore**, 26, and D'Andre Coffee, 25, to stand trial on felony murder and assault charges. If convicted, they could receive life in prison.

However, based on testimony at a preliminary hearing this week, Langston ruled Culbreth refused to shoot at police.

A fifth suspect, Eugene Childrey, 18, cut a deal with the prosecutors and testified against the other four. Childrey admitted being in the van and testified about what the others did. In exchange, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office agreed to drop the murder and assault charges against him.

Childrey and Culbreth will be tried on charges of kidnapping, extortion and armed robbery, which could land them in prison for five to 15 years if convicted.

Langston said she would have dropped the murder charges against Coffee, but he encouraged **Moore** to "Bang at 'em" as the police were following, according to Childrey.

Suzette Hackney can be reached at 1-313-222-6672 or by E-mail at hackney@freepress.com.

Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

Page: 1A

Index Terms: POLICE ; SHOOTING ; THOMAS CULBRETH ; COURT

Record Number: 9901160105

Copyright (c) 1999 Detroit Free Press