

JUDGE TELLS COPS CASE SPECTATORS TO BE QUIET

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A judge clamped down Tuesday on bitter sniping between court spectators at the preliminary examination for the four suspects in last month's slaying of a Detroit police officer.

Two of the officer's relatives said they have been ridiculed and snickered at by the defendants' friends, prompting 36th District Judge Deborah Langston to threaten that she "will get real ugly" if there is further contact between the two factions.

But that didn't calm the atmosphere. As defendant Thomas Culbreth's mother left the courtroom, she yelled: "This is America. I can say what I want to say."

It was the second day of the exam, which will determine whether the four men will stand trial for killing Officer Shawn Bandy and injuring Officer Lloyd Todd on Dec. 5 as the officers pursued the men after a suspected kidnapping.

Eugene Childrey, 18, who says he was in the van with the four suspects, cut a deal in return for his testimony against Culbreth, 20; James Langford, 24; **Montez Moore**, 26, and D'Andre Coffee, 25. All are charged with first-degree murder, kidnapping, extortion and attempted murder.

Childrey agreed to plead guilty to kidnapping and armed robbery. He testified he has been promised confinement in a "special prison" away from the other defendants.

"You got a real good deal, did you not, Mr. Childrey?" asked lawyer Ray Paige, who represents Langford. "You would lie on your mama for that deal, wouldn't you?"

Susan Bandy said the defendants' relatives made negative comments about her slain son and the case. Genet Barthwell, Todd's sister, said she also heard snickering.

"I was surprised by the attitude of the defendants, their attorneys and the lack of respect for the court and for the families," she said.

The exam continues today.

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