

## TROY POLICE ON GUARD SECURITY TIGHT FOR A-TEAM EXAM

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The **Troy** City Hall resembled a military camp Friday as the preliminary examination began in a murder case against Charles Obey -- named by **police** as a member of the **A-Team**, the street enforcement branch of Young Boys Inc., Detroit's most- notorious drug-trafficking organization.

The city hall, which includes **Troy** 's 52-4 District Court, was closed to the public from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. **Police** officers, armed with semiautomatic rifles ringed the multitiered building, built into the side of a hill **on** Big Beaver Road.

District Judge William Bolle originally had refused entry to the news media -- a move successfully challenged by Free Press attorney Hershel Fink.

**POLICE BELIEVE** the **A-Team** is responsible **for** at least five slayings since February. Obey's case is the first chance authorities have had to try a member of that group.

Obey, 18, of the 13500 block of Woodmont in Detroit, is one of three people charged with the May 29 slaying of Ricky Gracey, 26, of Detroit, at the **Troy** home of Portia Sturdivant Jones, 26. She is the wife of Milton (Butch) Jones, the convicted kingpin of Young Boys Inc.

**Police** say that Gracey and three accomplices tried to rob Jones at her home but that she shot Gracey once with a shotgun and then phoned the **A-Team**. Obey, Spencer Tracy Holloway, 20, of Southfield, and Andre Williams drove to Jones' ranch-style home **on** Adams Road **on** the **Troy** -Bloomfield Township border.

Portia Jones and Holloway, who were charged with Obey, are being sought, **police** said.

Obey sat impassively at the defense table throughout the testimony.

AS HIS FIRST witness, assistant prosecutor Gary Chopp called Williams, 22, who drove the car the night of the slaying.

As his mother and father listened, Williams said Holloway loaded an Israeli-designed Uzi submachine gun that had been modified to fully automatic as they drove to the Jones home.

"When we got close to Portia's house," Williams said, "he took the Uzi out of the briefcase and loaded it. You could hear the clip going in. . . . Charles (Obey) opened his gun up and closed it back. It was a long .38."

As they pulled the car onto the lawn near the front door of the Jones home, Williams said, they saw Gracey **on** the ground. "He was moaning and asking **for** water," Williams said. "He said, 'I'm sorry.' "

Williams then testified:

"They started shooting the Uzi, and Charles shot four or five times. . . . I couldn't hear nobody talk because of all the guns. . . . I was just looking at what was happening. He was bouncing up and down. He stopped when the shooting stopped."

WILLIAMS SAID Holloway then went through Gracey's pockets and put a plastic bag over Gracey's head. Portia Jones and Kathy Combs, who was staying at the home, got a blanket and a sheet, Williams said, and wrapped Gracey's corpse. Gracey was then put into the trunk of a car and the group left the Jones home in two cars.

After dumping Gracey's body near a garage **on** the north side of Detroit, Williams said he and the others drove to a home **on** Littlefield, where they met Jones.

The hearing will resume at 8:30 a.m. Monday. Combs, who has left the state because of of threats **on** her life, is expected to testify.

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