

16, 17, 18 ELOISE SPELLMAN

Age- 41 322 Hunterdon Street

HATTIE GAINER

Age- 53 302 Hunterdon Street

REBECCA BROWN

Age- 29 298 Bergen Street

DATE: July 15, 1967

TIME: Between 6:00 and 7:00 P.M.

Mrs. Eloise Spellman was fatally shot in the left side of the neck while standing in the window of her 10th floor apartment in the Hayes Homes Project on Hunterdon Street which is diagonally across from a firehouse located at the corner of Springfield Avenue and Hunterdon Street. Several witnesses testified to heavy fire by State Police and National Guardsmen directed at the upper floors of the Project.

Mrs. Hattie Gainer was fatally wounded in the chest while she was in her second floor apartment at 302 Hunterdon Street at about the same time that Mrs. Spellman was killed. Her daughter observed State Police in the area and immediately after the shooting the State Police entered her building investigating suspected sniper fire from the building.

Mrs. Rebecca Brown whose home was in the same general area as Mrs. Gainer's and Mrs. Spellman's was

fatally wounded in the left abdomen by rifle fire at about the same time. A relative said that bullets had splintered the window frame of the window at which Mrs. Brown was standing. He stated that National Guardsmen had arrived in the area just before the shooting, had dismounted from their vehicles and had taken cover behind them. Then they commenced shooting at the surrounding buildings.

These three women were all innocent victims of shooting by State Police and National Guardsmen who had responded to the area because of reported sniper fire and at the request of the commanding officer of the fire house located at the corner of Springfield Avenue and Hunterdon Street. He testified that there had been no police nor guardsmen in the area and that he had been obliged to take the fire company out of service because of persistent sniper fire in the area. The tapes of State Police communications indicate that there was sniper fire directed at the southerly side of the firehouse at this time. It was impossible to determine the identity of either State Police or National Guardsmen who fired weapons in the area.

Due to insufficient evidence of any criminal misconduct on the part of any identifiable individuals, the Jury found no cause for indictment in any of these three deaths.