

Crime Stoppers

Associated Press

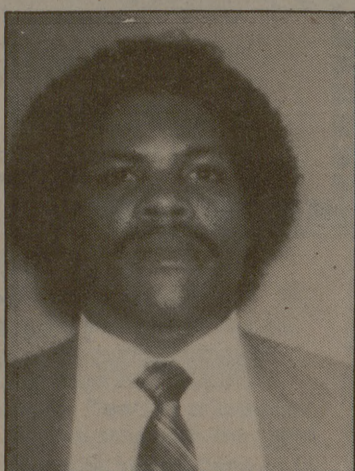
LUBBOCK — It began with a broken windshield. It ended with two persons being seriously wounded and an arrest warrant being issued for a State of Texas bank examiner.

The incident occurred on May 12, 1983. At about 5:40 p.m., someone called the Lubbock Police Department and said the windshield of his car had been broken at My Car Wash on 50th Street and asked for an officer to take a report.

When the caller was informed that it was a civil matter and not criminal in nature, he became irate and said he would kill the employees at the car wash.

As patrol cars were being dispatched to the car wash, a second call came in reporting a shooting. When police officers arrived, they found Jack Earl Creel, 59, the owner of the car wash, and his son Jackie, 31, lying wounded on the floor of the business.

Witnesses told investigators they saw a black man around 30 years of



Darwin Adrian Fowler

age, about 5 foot 10 inches, with a medium build, fire a series of shots through the windows of the car wash office. They said the man then got into a two-tone silver 1977 or 1978 Chevrolet 4-door vehicle and left the scene.

By checking with the car wash, investigators found a work ticket on a vehicle eventually traced back to Darwin Adrian Fowler, a 34-year-old Austin resident who was a bank examiner at Briercroft Savings and Loan.

Two witnesses later identified Fowler as the suspect in the shooting.

On May 24, 1983, the Lubbock County Grand Jury indicted Fowler on two counts of attempted murder. Lubbock law enforcement authorities have been trying to track down their elusive prey ever since.

Fowler is described as a black male, 5 foot 10 inches, 155 pounds, with black hair and brown eyes.

This week Texas Most Wanted, a cooperative effort between the Texas Crime Stoppers Advisory Council and the Department of Public Safety, is offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the capture of Fowler.

Anyone with information on Fowler's whereabouts is asked to call Texas Crime Stoppers at 1-800-252-8477 or their local Crime Stoppers

First day of jury deliberation bears no fruit in Elder trial

Associated Press

HOUSTON — A federal court jury Wednesday began deliberating the case of two sanctuary workers accused of illegally transporting two Salvadoran aliens.

The 10-man, two-woman jury deliberated about one hour, 45 minutes without reaching a verdict in the case against Jack Elder and Stacey Lynn Merkt.

The two were identified by one of the Salvadorans as the two Americans who helped him and several other aliens after they crossed into the United States from Mexico.

The pair's defense attorney argued, however, that the Salvadoran, Jose Andreas Mendez-Valle, was "fighting for his life" and that Border Patrol agents coerced him into cooperating.

"They're going for blood and when they're going for blood they don't care what the facts are," Steve

Cooper told the 10-man, two-woman jury in U.S. District Judge Filemon Vela's court.

Merkt, 30, was charged with one count of conspiracy and two counts of transporting the aliens from a shelter in San Benito, where she is a volunteer, to a McAllen bus station on Nov. 21.

Elder, 41, director of the shelter, was charged with two counts of conspiracy and two counts of helping two Salvadorans enter the United States illegally. He also was accused of driving the aliens on Nov. 8 from the U.S.-Mexican border to the Catholic church-sponsored refugee shelter.

The defense presented seven witnesses who said they saw Merkt during a 10-day trip that included seven days in New York last November. It is during that time that the government alleges she aided the Salvadorans.

On Tuesday, Merkt's fiance, John

Blatz, and five other witnesses testified they saw the defendant during her New York visit.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Guerra rested the government's case Tuesday after Mendez identified Elder and Merkt as the Americans who had helped the refugee group.

Mendez said that about Nov. 7, he, Maria Caetana Rosales-Cruz and his three Salvadoran cousins crossed the Rio Grande and were met on the U.S. side by an American man.

Elder and Merkt are charged only with assisting Mendez and Cruz.

Mendez identified Elder as the man who aided him. Testifying through a translator, he said he paid Merkt at the shelter to buy the group bus tickets to Houston, and she drove them to the bus station in McAllen.

Cruz, however, while confirming that the refugees were helped by an American man and woman, could not identify Elder and Merkt.

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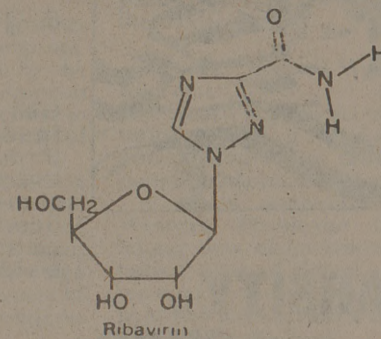
MARCH 2, 1985

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