

The Birmingham News

Birmingham, Alabama • Tue, Dec 31, 1963

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For some, there was violent death



Marcher William Moore died

Time stopped in a Birmingham Church at 10:22 a.m., Sunday, Sept. 15.

At that moment a heavy explosion shattered the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. The blast killed four little girls and injured 15 other Negroes at worship.

It was as senseless as the Haymarket bombing in Chicago, or Nazi murders of Jewish children.

NO EVENT other than the assassination of President Kennedy shocked the nation more deeply in 1963, and its echoes were heard around the world.

But the greatest grief was in the heart of Birmingham, tormented by racial unrest, its reputation as a great city of the South stained by hate-motivated fanatics.

Two Negro youths were killed later in the day, one by

police trying to halt an escaping rock-thrower, the other by two white teen-agers returning from a segregationist rally.

The day of bomb and blood brought to eight the number of persons killed during racial disturbances and demonstrations in Alabama during 1963.

A .22 CALIBER RIFLE spat twice in the darkness alongside U. S. Highway 31 near Keener late Wednesday, April 23. A big man who had been pulling a grocery cart slumped to the ground.

He was William L. Moore, 35, a Baltimore, Md., mail carrier. He was an ex-Marine, a former mental patient, a writer, a crusader for racial integration.

Moore had been walking through racially-tense Alabama wearing signs which read, "Eat at Joe's — both black and white," and "Equal

rights for all Mississippi or bust." The cart contained his personal possessions.

Officials later jailed Floyd Simpson, a DeKalb County rural store operator, and charged him with murder. He was freed on \$5,000 bond. The Etowah County Grand Jury investigated Moore's death and failed to return an indictment against Simpson.

BIRMINGHAM WAS the unhappy scene of the other seven fatalities.

John Coley, a 20-year-old Negro, was killed during rioting on Dynamite Hill after the residence of Negro Atty. Arthur D. Shores was bombed for the second time in 15 days Wednesday, Sept. 4.

Rioting Negroes met first officers who rushed to the scene with a rain of rocks, bottles and bricks. Bullets thudded against police cars. Police fired over the heads of the rioters to force them back.

Coley fell with three wounds. Twenty-one persons were injured.

VICTIMS OF THE church bombings were Cynthia Wesley, 14, Carol Robertson, 16, Denise McNair, 11, and Addie Mae Collins, 14. The Sunday school lesson was "The Love That Forgives."

Killed by police later that day was Johnny Robinson, 15. Victim of the white youths was Virgil Ware, 13, of Sandusky. One said he thought the Negro boy had a rock in his hand, and fired a pistol.



Denise McNair



Cynthia Wesley



Carol Robertson



Addie Mae Collins

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