

# More excerpts from testimony before the truth commission

Continued from H1



**Tammy Tutt, former Morningside Homes resident:**  
Rumors had been circulating ... that the Klan was coming and that nobody was safe in the community. I had a vision ... in my 10-year-old mind, of people running up and down the streets, shooting at all of us and none of us would be left standing ... People knew about it and they were so disempowered that they could not join together to bring about a change. I can remember how it made me feel to watch people shake their heads at the TV ... and walk away instead of shaking their hands and joining their voices and minds and bodies together to impact the next 30 minutes that have now become the next 30 years."



**Jeff Thigpen, Guilford County register of deeds:**  
I come here to you today as a leader that comes to acknowledge, and not to fear, that the future we want to build every day in Greensboro is being built upon the past. And we have a common responsibility ... to understand that history and to use that history to help guide us as we move forward together. ... Jim Melvin's a member of our community. Rev. Nelson Johnson is a member of our community ... and so is the media. We are all learning individuals; we are all learning institutions.



**Virginia Turner, former White Oak union worker:**  
The day of November Third I woke up to the news on TV about a shooting in Morningside Homes. ... My first thought was, "Oh my God, that is us," and I say "us" because we were a union. ... The shootings directly did have an effect on people's attitude towards the union. I don't know if it was fear — it was quite possibly fear, of being a part of the union.



**Gary Curtis Cepnick, former WFMY news director:**  
[T]he media basically knew where the event was going to take place, and it was there. The police department's initial argument after the fact was that there had been a change, a last-minute change in location and hey, we didn't get there. I always thought it was ironic because we knew where it was and we knew where to go and where to be.



**Marty Nathan, widow of Mike Nathan, killed on Nov. 3:**  
[W]e knew through the work of investigative journalists that Edward Dawson had been in the pay of the Greensboro police, specifically Officer Cooper, and had contacted Virgil Griffin and gone to Raleigh and Lincolnton to recruit Klansmen to come to Greensboro. ... We also knew that Joe Grady had told the Winston-Salem Chronicle that "a man who was not a Klansman was to bring most of the guns to Greensboro and knew who was to be shot," indicating a plan for killing individuals. ...

The questions must be answered:  
What was the full relationship between the Police Intelligence Division, the FBI and [Eddie] Dawson?  
What was the full relationship between Cone Mills and the police and other agencies, and did Cone Mills request and receive a police investigation of the WVO before Nov. 3, including checking license plates in the parking lot?  
There has been an attempt lately to lay the blame on Captain Hampton for the "low profile," yet Chief Swing himself was at the station that morning. Who was it that really devised the plan — the early lunch, pulling officers away specifically from Morningside? ...  
Where were the communications between [ATF agent Bernard] Butkovich and the FBI and the Greensboro police?  
What did the district attorney know about Dawson's activities before Nov. 3? ...

Once the police knew that an armed caravan of KKK and Nazis was driving toward legally permitted protesters gathering in a black community, why were police not dispatched immediately to ensure the safety of the protesters and the community?  
You just can't have reconciliation without truth, which means real, specific concrete facts. We the victims need and deserve to know the answers to our questions before we can rest.



**Elizabeth Wheaton, author of "Codename Greenkil: The 1979 Greensboro Killings":**  
I would like to give credit to two police officers ... Art League and Sam Bryant ... who had driven towards the demonstration site when they heard the undercover officer radio "shots fired." They saw a line of cars moving west on Everitt Street, and when they heard "most of the fire is coming from the yellow van," League got out of the car with a shotgun, stepped into the path of the yellow van and ordered the driver to stop. By then Bryant had pulled the police car to block the street, and he too got in front of what he and League knew to be a vanload of shooters. By the time the other police got there, these two officers had disarmed the Klan and Nazis and had them down on the ground ready for arrest.  
To my knowledge those officers have never been publicly recognized for their bravery, and I hope that is among the things the commission will do.



**Floris Weston, widow of Cesar Cauce, one of those killed on Nov. 3:**  
Duke had a lot of separate unions, and they were all small and weak. He [Cesar] was working to try and combine them into one stronger union. He was well known as a workers' activist at Duke and in Durham city. This work, in my opinion, caused him to be singled out along with Bill, Sandi, Mike and Jim, who were all doing similar types of work in the places where they were employed. ... We were not violent people. As opposed to what some may think as a result of what happened, we were not violent.



**Judge James Long, presiding judge in the state murder trial:**  
Without the evidence of the FBI signal analysis, a person watching the videotapes would naturally conclude that there could be no justification for shooting toward a crowd of demonstrators. However if the jury believed the testimony of the defendants was truthful and believed the signal analysis report was accurate, then a verdict of not guilty by reason of self-defense could be sustained. ... Without hearing all of the evidence, which by the way consumed 14-and-a-half weeks of trial time, and without sitting through seven days through deliberations with the jurors, it is difficult to conclude an unjust result was reached.



**Michael Roberto, assistant history professor at N.C. A&T who teaches courses in the history of revolutions:**  
[W]e must view these events in the context of general socio-economic-political conditions then emerging across much of the United States in the late 1970s. The main reason for the downward turn in domestic conditions was the end of American hegemony over the world market, bringing dislocation and downsizing to domestic markets and in turn signaling the beginning of a protracted period of adverse labor relations in many of the nation's cities and smaller communities, which have persisted into the present. ...  
[T]hese structural changes have torn at the social fabric, giving rise to a politics of resentment and right-wing populism that mushroomed throughout the 1980s and 1990s in various parts of the country; for example, recently demonstrated in a quite compelling book by Thomas Frank, "What's the Matter With Kansas?" Must we consider conditions in Greensboro in the late 1970s as an indication of this trend? And if so,

**MORE ONLINE**  
Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission Web site: <http://www.greensborotr.org/>  
Most of the transcripts of the 54 who testified at the hearings are available at the commission's blog: <http://www.gtrc.blogspot.com>  
The News & Record has posted audio from the hearings. See "Truth panel" under the Multimedia section at the paper's Web site ([www.news-record.com](http://www.news-record.com)).

should we consider Nov. 3 itself as a harbinger of things to come? ... [I]t is vital for city officials to come to their senses and study the history of Nov. 3 and its aftermath. To connect the past and the present makes for sound political thinking.



**Jeff Woods, author of "Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968":**  
Local law enforcement and the city's authorities had a set of assumptions in place that in large part determined their reaction to the clash. Though they were concerned about the Klan, they shared its basic Southern nationalist ideology and its concern for outside communist threats and black revolution. They were institutionally and culturally much more prepared to assume a greater threat from the black and red ralliers than they were from the Klan.



**Mab Segrest, author of "Memoir of a Race Traitor":**  
At [N.C. Coalition Against Racist and Religious Violence] we saw two causal factors in this sharp increase in hate activity which had made North Carolina the worst state in the country for far right activity and hate violence by 1983. One was the result of a criminal justice system's failure to hold anyone accountable for these events that had left five people dead. And this sent a pretty powerful message that other organizing of this type would probably be permitted. And then the second factor, the November Third attacks were part of a shift towards the right in national politics and a global restructuring in our economy that was sending North Carolina jobs over borders and overseas.



**Rev. Mazie Ferguson, attorney and president of the Greensboro Pulpit Forum:**  
There ought to be a police review board that reviews the actions of police officers in every community. And that board ought to be composed of citizens and it ought to have subpoena power. I am told that you can't have subpoena power because the state of

North Carolina will not allow it. That is simply a temporary situation. ... Any law is just a passing whim of a society at any point in time. Whenever people are ready to change it, they have the power to do so. ... Greensboro is not unique. Our police officers are not properly scrutinized by government. And we have got to do better than that because we need them.



**Capt. Rick Ball, police officer at the scene after the shootings:**  
I certainly do not want to undervalue the devastating impact that this event had on family and friends of those who lost their lives or were injured that day. I do want you to understand that for the police officers exposed to the tragedy of this event, it was one of many. Please don't misunderstand the department's or individual officers' silence as indifference or conspiracy. It's a simple matter that we have to move on. ... Nobody is going to say that everything was perfect. It wasn't. It wasn't. Like most everything we do. We try to learn from it.



**Spoma Jovanovic, UNCG communication faculty member:**  
In Greensboro we point proudly toward our distinguished levels of charitable giving and volunteerism, recognized as among the best in a social capital benchmark ... At the same time we flinched at our low levels of social trust and near absent political protest that was once a model for the nation. The significance of the past for the city today is reflected in this very statistic. Good will, on the one hand, and lack of meaningful engagement on the other. Good people who are concerned with air quality, noise pollution, race, housing for the homeless, animal protection, global warming and peace are labeled frequently and swiftly as I've noticed, as naysayers, communists, extremists, and unpatriotic. ... All too often the hope for a productive dialogue is stymied before it is even started.



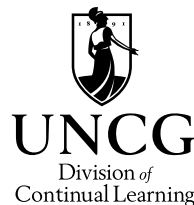
**Si Kahn, musician and executive director of Grassroots Leadership:**  
I love it that in my home state of North Carolina we are taking leadership from the ANC [African National Congress], from people in South Africa, and of course making it our own as we will. I believe that the death of hope is an act of violence. I hope that we re-establish a level of hope. And I think it can begin in Greensboro, I think it can spread to other places.



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**INFORMATION SESSIONS:**

Tuesday, November 8 • 7 pm • Barnes & Noble, Winston-Salem  
Wednesday, November 9 • 7 pm • Barnes & Noble, Greensboro

## Mao

Continued from Page H5

This hefty, heavily researched book paints Mao as all black, with no shades of gray.  
First published in June in Great Britain, "Mao" has already aroused both praise and criticism because of the picture it paints of unrelieved moral and human disaster, which it lays at Mao's door, including the charge that he was responsible for more than 70 million Chinese deaths in peacetime.  
Obsessed with the idea he could dominate the world if China, with its huge population, became a military superpower, Mao, the authors say, exported millions of tons of scarce food to the Soviet Union to pay for conventional and atomic arms, coldly ignoring the widespread famine this produced in the countryside.  
As the heroic leader of "the Long March," a 6,000-mile trek under constant fire to seek refuge for his followers in Yan'an in 1934, Mao was admired by many in the West. The authors say he never cared about the peasants and that the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek

put up little or no resistance to the 80,000 marchers because he wanted Stalin to release his young son who was being held hostage in Moscow.  
"Absolute selfishness and irresponsibility lay at the heart of Mao's outlook," the authors write. "Mao did not believe in anything unless he could benefit from it personally."  
The authors claim that Gen. George C. Marshall, the American mediator, contributed indirectly to Mao's victory over Chiang in the 1940s civil war. Having achieved a cease-fire in China proper against all odds, Marshall angrily demanded the Nationalists call a four-month halt to attacks on the communists in Manchuria. This allowed the communists to maintain a secure base in northern Manchuria and link up with the Russians.  
Marshall's order "was probably the single most important decision affecting the outcome of the civil war. ... With help from Washington, however unwittingly, Mao's victory nationwide was only a matter of time."  
The authors reveal that Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai alone approved China's entry into the Korean War. Mao's motive: to get Stalin to give China nuclear weapons so it could become a

military superpower.  
"For decades to come Mao's determination to preside over a military superpower in his lifetime was the single most important factor affecting the fate of the Chinese population."  
As a result, millions died of starvation.  
The authors say President Nixon made countless concessions to Mao and got nothing in return for his 1972 visit to Beijing.  
Shortly after Nixon's visit, it was discovered that Zhou had cancer. Mao, they said, forbade surgery and did not want Zhou to interrupt his brilliant handling of the statesmen who poured into Beijing after Nixon's visit ended China's international isolation.  
In 1976, Zhou and Mao died only a few months apart, ending an era for China that was unlike any other in its terror and drama.  
*John Roderick spent seven months in Yan'an with Mao in the 1940s, reporting the communist side of Marshall's mediation mission. He reported from China for AP from 1945 to the 1949 communist takeover, and from the 1972 reopening of China to 1984.*