

VANCOUVER 5 TRIAL BY MEDIA

The procedural hearings opened on September 6. Their main chance is to demonstrate that they are unable to have a 'fair' trial and that natural justice cannot take place given that they have already been prejudged by the media and that the police have been accomplices to this infringement. The State hopes to railroad the five by prejudicing future jurors (there will be four trials with four sets of jurors, each influenced by the outcome of trial 1, 2 and 3 respectively). Trial number 1 is on twelve counts including: possession of weapons, explosives, stolen property, and conspiracy to rob a security truck. As far as the State is concerned, these charges have the best probability for obtaining convictions (it is alleged that the firearms, explosives and stolen property was found in their possession and that they were caught 'red-handed'). The State then hopes to get convictions in the remaining three trials on the basis that the five defendants would have been found guilty on charges associating them with 'terrorism' or at least the capability of undertaking 'terrorist' acts.

Between now and October the trial will go through several preliminary stages. The conduct of the police (or rather their misconduct) will be examined as part of a defence submission that the trial cannot proceed because of the prejudice surrounding the case. The next stage is for the defence to challenge the jurors and their alleged impartiality. Then comes a detailed submission of evidence from the prosecution who will try to convince the judge that the State has a convictable case. Trial number 2 is not expected to take place until



January 1984. This trial will include three counts of firebombing porn video stores. Again the positioning of these charges in the running order suggests that the police are confident of providing 'evidence' of involvement by the five. Altogether these three charges are, compared to those that come, relatively minor. Their importance, however, is to demonstrate to the jurors of trials number 3 and 4 that the five defendants are not your average 'militant protesters' but are capable of carrying out bombings and similar

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