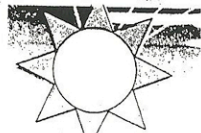


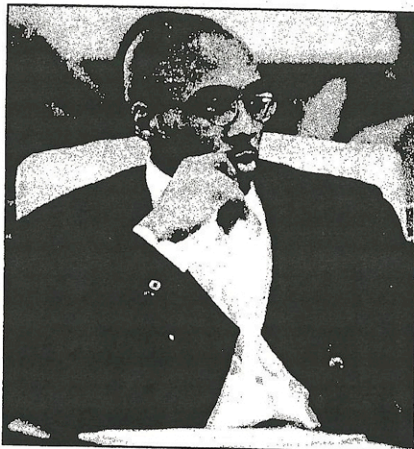
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## Witnesses identify Jackson as gunman

### Defense claims self defense in shooting

By Jessica Brown  
Butler County Bureau  
HAMILTON

E.L. Hubbard/Journal-News

Murder suspect Keyawn Jackson awaits the start of his trial Monday in Common Pleas Judge H. J. Bressler's courtroom. Jackson faces numerous charges involving a Feb. 19 shooting at the Mahogany Lounge in Hamilton.

Murder suspect Keyawn Jackson was fighting for his life when he fired the single shot that killed his friend and injured one of his alleged assailants, according to his attorney.

"Witnesses said they thought he (Jackson) was going to be killed. A weapon was used in self defense," said defense attorney Clyde Bennett during opening arguments at Jackson's trial on Monday.

Jackson, 22, of 619 Ludlow St. No. 2, is charged with one count each of murder, involuntary manslaughter, felonious assault, weapons under disability and illegal possession of a firearm in a liquor permit premises for the Feb. 19 shooting at the Mahogany Lounge at 558 S. Front St.

According to police, a single bullet struck Cincinnati resident Chico Morris in the leg, then struck Damon

Collier, 25, of 1770 N.W. Washington Blvd. in the face, killing him.

Morris was treated and released from the hospital. Both Collier and Jackson were former Miami University Hamilton students. Collier had been a football standout at Hamilton High School.

Butler County Assistant Prosecutor Craig Hedric said Morris and Jackson were in an altercation the evening of Feb. 19. He said Jackson later instigated a fist fight at the Mahogany Lounge, then pulled a gun and fired one shot.

But Bennett claimed Morris and about five other men jumped Jackson, who then "fired the gun in an attempt ... to cease the brutal, savage attack," not to hurt or kill anyone.

Numerous spectators packed Common Pleas Judge H. J. Bressler's courtroom on Monday, listening, whispering, sometimes crying as they listened to testimony.

Hamilton Police Officer James Gross said that when he arrived at the bar Collier was on the floor bleeding.

"He started telling me about his kids, that he didn't want to die because of his kids," Gross said.

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