

Shooter Left Journal - Police Seek Rampage Motive in Entries

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Author: Associated Press

Police are analyzing racist notations in a journal apparently owned by Benjamin Nathaniel Smith, hoping to learn more about the deadly shooting rampage in the Midwest last weekend.

A journal filled with white supremacist views and apparently written by Smith was found inside his car, police said Friday.

"Anyone who knows the history of this plague upon humanity who calls themselves the Jews will know why I have acted," reads the opening passage on several pages of writings, police said.

"We're continuing to try to piece together all the chain of events--anything that may give us a better picture of exactly what happened," said Skokie police Sgt. Michael Ruth. "We believe that Benjamin Smith acted alone. However, we need to be absolutely positive."

Investigators have not determined if the journal was written during last weekend's shootings, Ruth said. But he said Smith's entries do include a "reference to a revolution on the Fourth of July."

Smith is believed to have killed two people and wounded nine others--all either Jews, blacks or Asians--in Illinois and Indiana before his suicide near Salem, Ill., last Sunday.

Ruth would not release the journal to the news media or discuss the writings in detail but said there is nothing in them that specifically refers to any of the victims. He said the journal contains "caustic, venomous, antisemitic" language.

The writings are in a spiral notebook found inside the blue Ford Taurus the 21-year-old was driving until he carjacked a minivan at a truck stop in southern Illinois.

Ruth said the handwriting is similar to handwriting on other papers that police know to be Smith's.

Also found in the car was a bulletproof vest and military-type bulletproof helmet. A substantial amount of cash was found, but Ruth said he did not know how much.

Police also have recovered a \$6,100 receipt dated June 15, showing Smith spending the money to print literature for the World Church of the Creator, an East Peoria-based white supremacist organization to which he belonged.

Meanwhile, one of six Chicago residents wounded in the weekend shooting spree--Ephraim Wolfe, a 15-year-old Orthodox Jew shot in the leg--has filed a lawsuit against the World Church of the Creator; the group's leader, Matthew Hale; Smith's parents; and Donald Fiessinger, who has been charged with selling guns to Smith without a license.

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