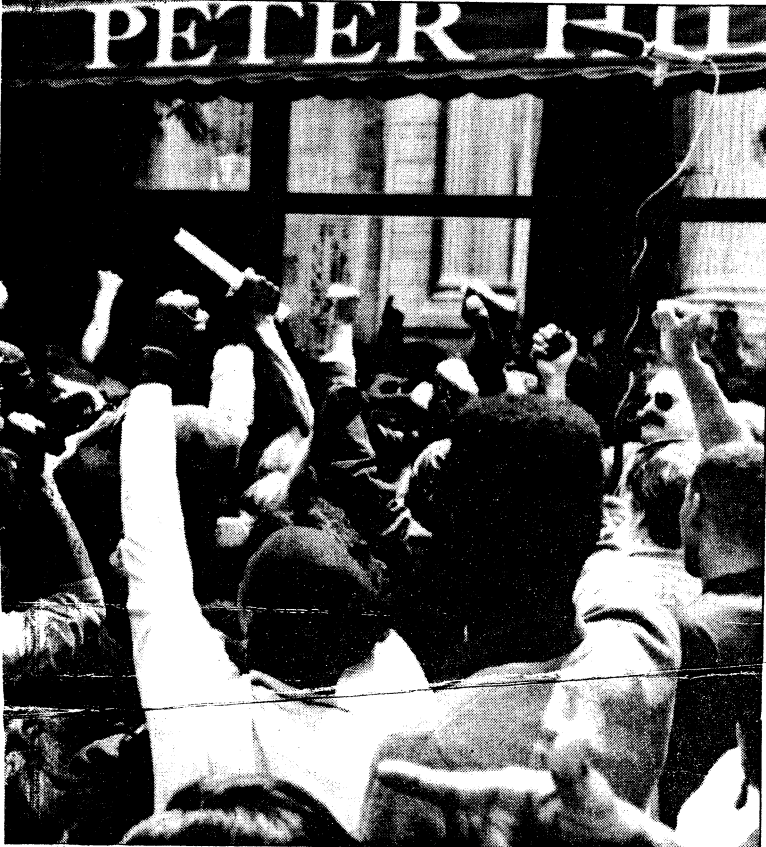


AWAITS VERDICT



Bensonhurst lawyer Stephen Murphy was lunching.

ANTHONY PESCATORE/DAILY NEWS

Lawyer gets fist in face

THE RIGHT HAND, and it was a good one, came hard and anonymous out of the pack. The punch landed squarely on Stephen Murphy's chin. The defense lawyer staggered, then whirled around. The attacker retreated into the mob on Montague St.

Murphy shifted his black attache case to his left hand and clenched his right fist. About 50 people were around him, most of them professional demonstrators from Tompkins Square Park.

One of them screamed, "We're going to kill you." Murphy looked into the mob and recognized death as a real possibility. He was still facing the crowd when a man slipped up behind him and kicked him in the buttocks. Another demonstrator threw a soda at him.

"Son of a b*tch," Murphy said. In this precise moment, Murphy knew the terror of Yusuf Hawkins. In Bensonhurst, the mob was white and its quarry black. Across the street from Brooklyn Supreme Court, the crowd was almost exclusively black and the victim white. The rage in both cases is simpleninded. Hawkins died of free will, daring to believe he could walk down a Bensonhurst block. Murphy is in the wrong case at the wrong time. He says this is his last race case. But blaming Murphy for what happened to Yusuf Hawkins in Bensonhurst is as silly as Murphy blaming Gina Feliciano for the slaying.

Two anti-crime cops, young white guys in football jerseys, appeared on either side of Murphy. They grabbed him by the shoulders and pushed him through the mob.

The cops ushered Murphy up the street and into Peter Hilary's restaurant. The lawyer, his manner firm and his face welted, walked to the back of the room and sat down at a table. A waiter came over, shaking. It was hard to hear Murphy's order over the chanting.

"Double vodka gimlet," he said.

Murphy brought a steady hand to his face. Two cops walked over and asked if he was all right.

"Listen," one of them said. "Let us take you out of here through the basement."

Murphy held up his hand in protest. He was being brave, perhaps to the point of foolishness.

"No," he said. "I'm going

MIKE McALARY



2 juries plug away

By **STUART MARQUES**
Daily News Staff Writer

The two Bensonhurst juries yesterday continued to deliberate the fate of accused ringleader Keith Mondello, 19, and alleged trigger man Joey Fama.

The suspects are charged with murder, riot and other counts in the Aug. 23 slaying of Yusuf Hawkins, a black 16-year-old who wandered into predominantly white Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, to look at a used car.

The Mondello jury completed its first full day of deliberations, while the Fama panel finished its second.

Two juries are being used because Mondello told police Fama was the gunman. Rules of evidence prohibited Fama's jury from hearing that statement.

Mondello's jury asked yesterday to hear the definitions of murder and manslaughter, indicating jurors may be considering the lesser counts of first or second-degree manslaughter rather than murder.

Fama's jury asked to rehear testimony from several key witnesses.

Last night, prosecutors speculated that the jurors in the Mondello case might be close to a verdict. Defense attorney Stephen Murphy said he was "not optimistic" about the possible outcome.

Both juries recessed for the night just before 8 o'clock.

Dinkins raps the Rev. Al

By **MARCIA KRAMER** and **DAVID J. KRAJCEK**

Daily News Staff Writers

As the Police Department mobilized yesterday for verdicts in the Bensonhurst racial slaying case, Mayor Dinkins rebuked the Rev. Al Sharpton for an apparent threat to "burn the town down" if there is not a murder conviction.

Separate Brooklyn juries are mulling the fates of Keith Mondello and Joey Fama in the racially motivated shooting death last Aug. 23 of Yusuf Hawkins, 16.

Police have prepared a plan in which hundreds of specially assigned task force cops will be ready to deal with any post-verdict violence.

"We are closely monitoring the situation for any eventuality," said Chief of Patrol David Scott. "I really don't want to go into any more detail than that."

'Calling for calm,' but . . .

Sharpton had been quoted by the New York Post as saying, "If they (the jurors) come back with less than murder . . . you are lighting a match to the end of a powder keg and telling us to burn the town down."

Yesterday, he explained the comment. "The family (of Hawkins) and I are on re-

cord calling for calm. We don't want any violence," Sharpton said during a break in his tax fraud case in Manhattan. "To think that Teaneck (N.J.) can explode and not New York City is naive. I'm just warning people."

Dinkins, however, said such talk can become self-fulfilling prophecy.

"The kind of comment made by Al Sharpton should not have been made," Dinkins said. "That kind of suggestion, that prediction, can bring the thing about sometime, and if the media decide to play it up big, well, there you are."

Sharpton said the racial tension conducive to violence has been fomented by the killing of a black youth by a white cop in Teaneck; ethnic tension between blacks and Korean merchants in Brooklyn; the alleged sexual assault of a black St. John's University student by white members of the lacrosse team; a City College professor who espouses white supremacist views, and the "legacy" of the Howard Beach and Bensonhurst racial killings.

He called upon elected officials to "lose their political laryngitis and discuss the issue of racism so this powder keg can be defused."

Staff writer Mark Kriegel contributed to this story.