

By PAUL JENKINS
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A terror-stricken witness in the Winter Garden massacre of four persons Christmas Eve — fleeing for fear he would be the next to die — was found Tuesday and begged to be jailed for his own protection.

Meanwhile, with a scarcely touched tray of food at his Florida Hospital bedside, ashen-faced J. T. Zeigler Jr. listened quietly as Circuit Court Judge Peter M. de Manio told him he faced the death penalty on charges of murdering his wife and three other persons in a hail of gunfire.

THE FRIGHTENED witness, identified as Robert Foster of Oakland, was found after a frantic four-day search by law enforcement officers.

"He was scared out of his wits," one police source said. "He ran because he believes somebody is out to kill him."

Sources said no outward threat had been made against either Foster or another witness, Ed Williams of Oakland, who they said was under police guard but not jailed. Foster was taken to an undisclosed jail.

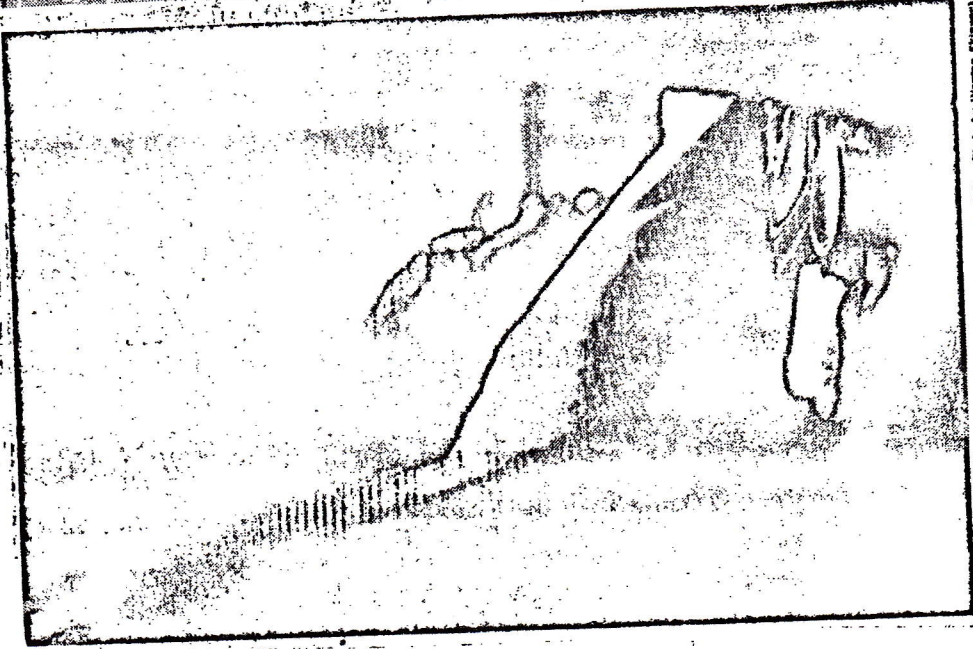
BUT FOSTER still feared reprisals. Officers would not comment on whether they believed his life to be in danger.

Foster and Williams were at the W. T. Zeigler Furniture Store Dec. 24 when a gunman cut down Zeigler's wife, Eunice; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Perry Edwards of Moultrie, Ga., and Charles Mays of Oakland, a longtime customer of the store.

Mays was accompanied by Foster on Christmas Eve when he went to Zeigler's store to pick up a used color television.



W. T. Zeigler Jr., charged with first degree murder in the shooting deaths of four persons, lies on his bed in Florida Hospital, left, as he hears Circuit Court Judge Peter M. de Manio, explain he faces possible death penalty. Room was crowded for hearing. Picture was taken through doorway. Above, Mrs. Eunice Zeigler, one of shooting victims, is shown in family photograph with her husband.



(Sentinel Star Photo by Warren Steiner)