

Acquittal: Prosecution hurt by lack of witnesses

Continued from 1B

punish for the senseless killing of Mrs. Barnes.

Assistant District Attorney Willie Saunders dismissed that contention in his closing argument. "It's about an 83-year-old woman being shot," he told the jury.

The case is about many people being endangered by the spray of gunfire from an military assault-type weapon, he said. "And it's about people, neighbors, being safe in their own homes. That's what this case is about."

Drive-by shootings by design don't leave eyewitnesses, Mr. Saunders said. "Typically, when gunfire is coming, you duck and run for cover."

But even without witnesses to the shooting, the evidence proved the white Oldsmobile that Mr.

Holmes had July 10-11, 1997, was used in the shooting; Mr. Holmes and Mr. Allen were identified as being in the car with a third man; and it was Mr. Allen and Mr. Lindsey who arranged for the car to be towed an hour after the shooting, the prosecutor argued.

After the trial, Mr. Saunders said: "We tried it. The jury made its decision, and we'll abide by it." His co-counsel on the case, Assistant District Attorney Michael Carlson, added his thoughts on the verdict.

"This should not be a reflection against the Richmond County Sheriff's Department and the excellent work they did on this case, especially the work (lead investigator) Kenny Lynch did."

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