

Four Han

BILLSBORO — Four alleged members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Congress of Racial Equality, were sentenced by Judge Chester A. Morris in Orange County Superior Court here yesterday to 30 days in the workhouse for violation of the North Carolina bus seating statute.

The jury was out only 13 minutes before returning a verdict of guilty in the case.

The four defendants served notice of appeal to the State Supreme Court. Motions for dismissal and nonsuit were denied.

The defendants were Isid Roodenko of New York and Joseph A. Felmont of Asheville, both white; and Bayard Rustin of New York and Andrew S. Johnson, Negroes.

They were arrested in Chapel Hill last April 13 at the bus station there after Ned Leonard, driver for the Carolina Coach Company, was unable to persuade them to sit in the vehicle according to rules of the company and the State statute.

The prosecution, under the direction of Solicitor W. H. Murdock of Durham, threw a bombshell into the defense ranks with the introduction of photostatic copies of alleged planned text of the so-called Jim Crow regulations.

Excerpts from papers relating to a "Journey of Reconciliation" contained detailed plans and instructions to small groups making "test trips" through several states in the "upper South."

Despite this evidence, Roodenko—the only defendant to testify—denied under questioning by private prosecutor L. J. Phipps of Chapel Hill that the group's motive was to test the State's segregation statute. Phipps assisted Solicitor Murdock in the prosecution.

Roodenko testified that his purpose on the trip was "to see what I can do in my own small personal way to promote better understanding among various groups of people."

All of the defendants except Johnson were committed by the government as conscientious objectors during the recent war.

Felmont was a student at the University of North Carolina in the class of 1942.

Roodenko, whose age was given as 31, said that while he was detained as a conscientious objector he went on a hunger strike in protest against certain regulations of which he disapproved.

Leonard, driver of the bus in which the four were riding at the time of their arrest, told the court that Johnson, one of the Negroes, was sitting next to Felmont as the third seat from the front of the bus despite the fact there were vacant seats toward the back. Roodenko was sitting with Rustin, the other Negro, in a seat toward the rear, Leonard said.

The bus driver told the court that "I asked Johnson to take a seat in the rear, and quoted him the law, but he refused to move. He said that he was under the im-