

Miami Herald, The (FL)

March 7, 2006

Edition: Final
Section: Metro & State
Page: 2B

TEEN'S SEIZED NOTE: 'YOUR GIRL HAD 2 DO WHAT SHE HAD 2 DO'

Author: ASHLEY FANTZ, afantz@MiamiHerald.com

Correction: A photo caption in some editions of Tuesday's Metro & State section incorrectly characterized the legal status of 17-year-old Camille Burke, who is awaiting trial, as the accompanying story accurately stated. She is charged with shooting a classmate on a school bus in Miramar. The caption was written by an editor and corrected for later editions.

Sometime before she shot a classmate on their school bus, a Miramar teenager wrote a disparaging note about her victim, a prosecutor said.

Miramar police seized the note from Camille Burke's bedroom shortly after the 17-year-old was arrested Nov. 15 and charged with firing a .32-caliber handgun at 18-year-old Kaliesha Cheatham, hitting the teen in the shoulder. Both **girls** attended Parkway Academy Charter High.

Cheatham survived, underwent several operations, and is now attending a Hallandale Beach school.

She still has trouble moving one arm, said Assistant State Attorney Maria Schneider, who introduced the Burke note into evidence in Broward Circuit Judge John J. Murphy's court Monday.

According to Schneider, Burke wrote: ``Wat Dey Do," slang for ``What They Do," then ``Your **girl** had 2 do wat she had 2 do. I had to show dis hoes out here who da real M.I.A. bitch is."

``M.I.A." refers to Miami, where the **girls** had both lived before their families moved to Broward, said Schneider.

The remainder of the note is a list of Burke's possessions she intended to give away - a cellphone, a shirt, a hat and some books.

Burke's attorney Bruce **Lehr** said that his client had received physical threats from Cheatham.

The list was a kind of will.

Burke ``thought she was going to be killed," he said.

Schneider contends that the note shows Burke is giving away her things because she expected to go to prison for the shooting.

CHARGED AS ADULT

Burke has been charged as an adult and could face life in prison.

She is being held without bond in the Joseph V. Conte Facility in Pompano Beach.

Judge Murphy is expected to decide this week whether Burke can bond out of jail before her trial begins.

The procedure, known as an Arthur trial, is available to defendants held on first-degree felonies facing life behind bars.

Burke's mother and stepfather stood beside their handcuffed daughter in court.

``If she's released, her mother has said she would be kept under lock and key at their home" in Broward, **Lehr** said. ``She would get home-schooling."

Burke was a ``good **girl** who reached her breaking point of victimization," **Lehr** said.

FISTFIGHT

At the time of the shooting, the **girls'** peers said Cheatham had teased Burke about her hair.

The two got into a fistfight in the back of the school bus the day before the shooting.

Cheatham's parents don't want Burke to bond out of jail, said Schneider, mainly because Burke hasn't seen a psychiatrist while at the Conte jail, a service that she could request.

``Whatever drove her to commit such a dangerous act hasn't been dealt with," Schneider said.

But Cheatham's parents don't want the teen to go to prison for the rest of her life.

``Something less than life would be appropriate," Schneider said.

``They aren't so angry that they are seeking the ultimate penalty."

Caption:

MARSHA HALPER/MIAMI HERALD STAFF IN COURT: Camille Burke, the 17-year-old Miramar teen convicted of shooting a schoolmate onboard a school bus, consults with her lawyer, Bruce **Lehr**, at the Broward County Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale.

photo: Camille Burke, the 17-year-old Miramar teen convicted of shooting a schoolmate onboard a school bus, consults with her lawyer, Bruce **Lehr**, at the Broward County Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale (a), Camille Burke (a)

Memo:

Correction ran March 8, 2006; see end of text.

Copyright (c) 2006 The Miami Herald

Record Number: 0603100100