

NATIONAL POST

VOL. 9 NO. 145 TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2007 www.nationalpost.com

Two hours passed between the first shooting at Virginia Tech, in which two people died, and the second, in which a man killed 30 people, and himself. Did police react too slowly?

33

DEAD

WORST SHOOTING RAMPAGE IN U.S. HISTORY

By MARY VALLIS in Blacksburg, Va.
PETER MORTON in Roanoke, Va.
AND ALLISON HANES

A Virginia university campus was a scene of carnage yesterday after a man and a woman were shot in a college dorm two hours before a gunman began roaming the corridors of an engineering building firing indiscriminately into classrooms.

With 33 dead, including the gunman, and 15 injured, the massacre at Virginia Tech was by far the most lethal shooting in U.S. history and raised immediate questions over why students were not warned away from campus in the moments following the initial violence.

Witnesses described hallways slick with blood, students jumping from windows to escape the violence and the wounded being dragged away by their arms and legs amid the crackling of gunfire.

“I’ve never experienced anything like this before,” said student Josh Lithow, who threw himself out of a second-story window when the rampage began about 9:20 yesterday morning. “It was many, many shots,” he told reporters.

See MASSACRE on Page A2

‘He started to shoot through the door. He didn’t say a single word the whole time. He didn’t look frightened, he didn’t look angry. Just like a straight face.’



Promise of the future lost amid bullets

FATHER RAYMOND J. DE SOUZA

Killings on campus are doubly brutal, for something also dies in those who survive, alongside the dead they mourn. Something of the campus itself dies. Thirty-two beautiful young lives have been cut short. And the campus, which ought to be a particular place of beauty, no doubt seems a very cruel place to be.

I heard the numbing news from Virginia Tech yesterday while in the economics department here at Queen’s University, discussing a student who needs a little help to graduate. That’s what April is for — students in the late-night camaraderie of cramming for finals, and their professors trying to clear all obstacles out of the path to convocation. It’s the time of year when students spontaneously talk about moving into the real world, and have an acute sense that the campus is indeed a world of its own.

President George W. Bush spoke about the campus as a “sanctuary,” violated yesterday by a mass murderer. I am not quite sure about that.

See DE SOUZA on Page A4