

Spy gets sentence of 35 years, plus 3 years for sexual assault

LONDON (AP) — Soviet spy Geoffrey Prime, convicted of espionage that caused "incalculable harm" to Britain and its Western allies during 14 years of treachery, was sentenced Wednesday to 35 years in jail.

The 44-year-old former translator for British intelligence was sentenced to three additional years for sexual assaults on three young girls. Police questioning about those crimes led him to confess his guilt and his espionage activities to his wife, who informed police.

Prime stared blankly ahead as sentence was pronounced.

His 37-year-old wife, Rhona, sobbed.

"By your treachery you have done incalculable harm to the interests and security of this country and the interests and security of our friends in the (NATO) alliance," Lord Chief Justice Lane said.

Prime held a finger to his lips, but did not flinch as defense lawyer George Carman, pleading for leniency, declared: "What you see

before you is a desperately lonely and totally inadequate person, a sexual and social misfit."

Earlier this month intelligence sources said Prime knew every monitored Soviet message and every code broken at Britain's Government Communications Headquarters for electronic intelligence-gathering in Cheltenham.

Prime, who learned Russian and German in the Royal Air Force, pleaded guilty to seven counts of passing top secret information to Soviet agents between 1968 and last April, and to sexually molesting girls aged between 11 and 14.

The hushed courtroom No. 1 at London's Old Bailey Central Criminal Court was told that after Prime's April 28 arrest, his wife found espionage equipment under a bed in their home.

The prosecution said his "indispensable tools of the modern spy" included a false bottom briefcase, a top secret British document, powerful radio, signal times and frequencies for radio contacts.

Shuttle ready, desert floods

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)

— America's space shuttle stood poised on its launch pad, ready for Thursday's "loss leader" debut as a commercial cargo carrier. The flight will be a multi-million dollar bargain for two firms whose communication satellites will be hauled to orbit.

Four astronauts finished up their training Wednesday and the landing-site weather was the only uncertainty to a liftoff at 7:19 a.m. EST on Columbia's five-day return to space.

"The machine is in great shape," an official said. Columbia's flight is its first as an operating space truck after four test missions.

Satellite Business Systems of McLean, Va., and Telesat Canada Ltd., are paying NASA \$17 million for launch services, a price negotiated years ago. The total cost of the flight is estimated at \$250 million.

Commander Vance Brand, a space veteran, and rookie pilot Robert Overmyer will fly the shuttle; mission specialists William Lenoir and Joseph Allen will take care of getting the satellites out of Columbia's cargo bay and into space at the proper time and place.

While launch-day weather seemed no problem at Cape Canaveral, it was a worry at Edwards Air Force Base in California, the Mojave Desert landing site that is the prime emergency runway at the start

of a shuttle flight.

"We have the only desert in the world that when you really want to use it, it floods," said Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, head of the shuttle program.

If landing conditions are not adequate for a launch-day emergency, a one-day delay could be called.

The shuttle, 11 years in development, has had four successful test flights — but this one inaugurates its career as a

wage-earner.

"This has been a long time in the planning," said shuttle program manager Glynn Lunney. "We're ready to go."

If everything goes as scheduled, Lenoir and Allen will kick out the first satellite — owned by Satellite Business Systems of McLean, Va., — eight hours after liftoff. The second satellite, owned by Telesat Canada Ltd, will be ejected 24 hours later.

Late Milk's man, Smith, awarded survivor's benefits by SF board

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — This city, where homosexuals wield great political clout, has awarded survivor's benefits to the gay lover of slain Supervisor Harvey Milk and proposed that gay city workers and their partners get the same benefits as married couples.

The second proposal, contained in an ordinance written by a homosexual supervisor, is aimed at benefitting gays but would also cover unmarried heterosexuals who work for the city.

Both moves would be unprecedented in San Francisco, where the usual estimate of the homosexual population is upwards of 100,000 out of the 674,000 residents.

The San Francisco Retirement Board, whose deci-

sions must be approved by the state, ruled 3-1 Tuesday that Scott Smith — Milk's business partner and lover — is entitled to a \$5,500 settlement.

Also Tuesday, a committee of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously urged giving the unmarried partners of all city employees — whatever their sexual preference — the same benefits as are granted spouses.

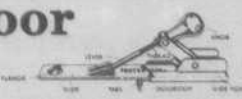
Mayor Dianne Feinstein, whose support from the gay community was regarded as crucial in her election to office, refused comment Wednesday.

"Lesbians and gay men are just as capable of enduring relationships as any person on the face of the earth," said the proposal's author, homosexual Supervisor Harry Britt.

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