

# Bogus Check Operations Earn Fast Tickets to State Prison for Majority

By JERRY STONE  
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The young man pushed the check to the clerk behind the cashier counter, peered at the change and strolled casually from the market. Detectives picked him up a few blocks away.

He who designs to pass a rubber check is very sure to bounce into the arms of the law. So say members of the Salem police department's check detail — and Confucius doubtless would agree.

This young man was one in a string of 64 bogus check arrests made by city detectives during the year 1955. Like a disturbingly large number of others, he foolishly believed that a blank check, a fraudulent flourish of pen and a bold front could be parlayed into quick, easy money.

Instead, he wound up with a

prison job — thanks to an alert clerk and swift police work.

**'Folly of Deed'**

If those contemplating a "check caper" could get a peek at piles of records in Salem headquarters, they would sense the folly of the deed. Files show that of 633 bad checks reported in this area during 1955 a total of 473 were cleared by arrests. During December — busiest month of the year — officers had a field day, clearing 63 of 80 bogus checks reported. Figures for the year also show an extremely high percentage of convictions.

Check traffic has followed a pretty consistent pattern, though 1954 was marked under '35 with 506 offenses brought to police attention. Of those, 349 were cleared by 47 arrests. The year 1953 saw 321 of 518 checks cleared on 63 bookings; 1952 was extremely

brisk with 630 reports, 419 clearances and 72 arrests; in 1951 the figures read 496 reported, 77 arrests and 317 cleared; and in 1950 it was 641 passed of which 443 were cleared on 97 "pinches".

**Peak in July**

While the past month of December was the busiest month check-wise during 1955, detectives say the peak normally comes in July. Reason for that, they explain, is presence in the area of large numbers of transients, seasonal workers and "drifters" from other parts.

Officers had complaints of 82 rubber checks for July 1954—but the total for the past July unaccountably fell to a subnormal 42.

Step into headquarters and listen to detectives discourse on what makes the average check-passer tick. They'll tell you that the proto-

type of the species is between 18 and 40; he's generally out of a job or else jumping from one position to another; and he likes to spend money fast. Some women try it, too.

**Over-Confident**

Like most who wander outside the law, this prototype thinks he can get away with it. And he may — for a time. But inevitably somewhere along the line his over-confidence will prove fatal and in writing that check to the latest "sucker" he'll actually be writing his own ticket into the Big House.

Detectives classify offenders into several categories, topped by the smooth-operating professionals — known in the trade as "check artists." The pros, knowing all the angles, are the toughest to hook.

**Amateur Operators**

Easier marks are the more plentiful amateur operators, catalogued as (1) local individuals who on impulse pull a "caper" because of financial straits; (2) transients out for an easy buck before hitting the road; (3) youths in need of quick money to go on a "fling."

The pros' M.O. (method of operations) means to forger; most amateurs do their writing on phony accounts. In matter of over-drawn accounts, detectives observe that mostly it's an act of carelessness rather than design. But an offender can still be hooked on a misdemeanor—if somebody wants to sign a complaint.

**Average 'Spree'**

Most check writers will average from \$50 to a couple hundred dollars when on a spree. Several years ago one cunning operator passed some \$2,000 worth before the "pinch."

Detectives, who often are amazed at the ease with which some persons are "suckered" by check passers, offer this bit of advice: "Be careful of out-of-state checks. A good share of them are likely to bounce."

# 2 Solons Ask Ike to Speed Flood Control

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sens. Morse and Neuberger (D-Ore) Saturday asked President Eisenhower to support supplemental appropriations to speed completion of authorized flood control works.

In a letter to the President they said:

"The catastrophic floods which swept away many lives and caused millions of dollars of damage again have underscored the urgent need for flood control provisions far beyond the scope of present plans which were keyed to the all too inadequate provisions of the 1956 budget."

In addition to hastened flood prevention work, they wrote "success and aid for the present affliction may call for still other action in the form of federal flood insurance."

The senators asked the President "because of the urgency of the situation . . . to give immediate consideration to directing the allocation of any available funds for expenditure on authorized flood control projects in our state in those areas where you find the needs to be most pressing."

They said they would work for added funds, and concluded: "The probability of success on this effort would be improved if recommendations of the executive branch supported such appropriations."

Meanwhile Rep. Ellsworth (R-Ore) forecast speedy House action on legislation to make additional disaster loan funds available for West Coast flood relief.

Ellsworth is one of several to introduce legislation along this line. He said the bills would not increase the total amount the Small Business Administration is authorized to lend but would make "any or all of the 175 million dollar existing authorization available for loans in disaster areas."

# France Puts Atom Reactor Into Action

PARIS (AP) — France Saturday put into operation its third and most powerful atomic reactor — "G-1" — designed to produce 33 pounds of plutonium a year. Plutonium is a man-made radioactive metal used in atomic bombs and reactors.

G-1, at Marcoule in south central France, is a 40,000-kilowatt job. Beginning in July it will be used to feed an experimental 5,000-kilowatt electric power plant. It will take about six months for

# Cardinal Celebrates Mass for Troops

NAPLES, Italy (AP) — Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, celebrated mass Saturday for American forces stationed at NATO headquarters for southern Europe.

The New York prelate who is traveling as vicar for all Roman Catholic chaplains with U. S. forces, a post he has held for several years, came here from Rome.

G-1 to reach its full strength. The two French atomic piles previously built are near Paris. They produce only small amounts of power for experimental purposes.

France has no atomic weapons.

**DR. SALK NAMED**  
MILAN (AP)—Italy's most widely circulated weekly, Oggi, reports a poll among Italian readers picked Dr. Jonas Salk of polio vaccine fame as man of the year for 1955.

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Scenes like that portrayed above kept the Salem police department's bad check detail humming during the year 1955. The man at right, confident he has found another "sucker" and some easy cash, attempts to pass a bogus check at a Salem market. But his confidence turned to dismay a short time later as he walked into detectives' arms. (Sketch by Jerry Stone.)

**TO AID CELEBRATION**  
LUENEBURG, Germany (AP)—The Plattdeutsche Volksfest Verein, one of the largest New York organizations of German origin Americans, will help this city celebrate its 1,000th anniversary jubilee next year. The New Yorkers plan to send a delegation by chartered plane. Luenenburg, in Lower Saxony, was chartered in 956.

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| D. Pullman's Case (men's, women's) . . . . . | 37.50      | 22.45       |
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