

BANKS PLANNED SHOT AS SPARK TO SET OFF WAR

Murder to Have Been Start of Reign of Anarchy for Jackson County

(An Editorial)

A plot so diabolical, so scheming and so fanciful as to have been almost unbelievable, apparently was the underlying motive which premeditated the slaying of a peace officer in Jackson county by Llewellyn A. Banks, with the assistance of his wife.

Evidence already uncovered, and much more evidence which is expected to be revealed when the slayers come to trial, indicates that the killing of Officer Prescott while attempting to serve a warrant on the man was not the climax of the program fostered and conceived by the cunning, cruel mind of Editor Banks. Rather, it was to have been the spark to set off the political hatreds, the personal malice and the petty grievances of an aggravated following and to have consumed the regular law and order of the county in its infernal destruction.

Although it is expected that in court Banks will plead insanity—which under the Oregon code means that he did not know it was wrong and criminal to kill a man—it is expected that evidence to be displayed in court will show that the man's mind had considered not only the killing of one officer, but also the taking of hundreds of lives if necessary in the revolution Banks had announced he would "lead himself."

It is known so far that Banks had, at the time of the murder, prepared his car for travel, had packed a suitcase with hundreds of rifle and revolver shells and a complete supply of outdoor clothing sufficient to last for an extended time. There are even inklings of information suggesting to what sections Banks planned flight—where he could complete plans for the overthrow of the county government and if necessary hold off any concerted siege by the authorities. Ample preparation had been made for a pitched battle and The Miner would not be surprised to find that, when his day in court comes, that preliminary arrangements had been made for the supplying of quantities of ammunition and dozens of rifles and pistols to followers and bodyguards.

After having been turned down by Sheriff Schermerhorn in his proposal to appoint 100 or 1000 deputies to take over the county, it is believed that Banks planned to shoot any officer or officers who approached him with an arrest warrant, flee to the hills and there

dig in and prepare for the next move toward overthrowing all opposition, presumably by force, as ample firearms were in readiness to carry out such a plan.

Rewards of sums of "relief money" totaling as much as \$3000 in a lump had allegedly been offered to followers as payment for military services by the county judge, and other angles, including abuse of the county commissary had been considered. It is alleged, to strengthen the overthrow organization. Even banditry and extortion, in addition to the kidnapping of county officers, had been considered as means to finance the anarchistic move.

Although reading like a distorted dream and the wildest imaginings of a crazed novelist, the overthrow of the county government move was rapidly crystallizing, to the complete surprise and amazement of most of the county's citizens. Having doted for several months on figures in past history who had overthrown their own governments in a like fashion, Banks evidently pictured himself as another leader of destiny, a man who would ultimately control a nation. Modesty was not one of his virtues, as has been graphically illustrated, and his impressions of grandeur and power had completely run away with his ambitions.

But it was the man's own failure to carry out his plot to kill both officers who attempted service of a warrant which thwarted the consummation of plans. Immediately following the shooting of Officer Prescott, State Police O'Brien raised from a prone position to glimpse the man in the act of throwing another shell into his rifle chamber, take aim and prepare for the second assassination.

But a surprise move on the part of O'Brien, who had been in many like situations, threw Banks off his guard, made him fearful of his own skin and caused him to duck out of range. The surprise came when the officer, faced with what seemed certain death, drew his own revolver and raised to take a pot shot at the man. To Llewellyn A. Banks, THAT was different. It was quite all right to speed bullets OUT of the house, but flying lead in HIS direction was not on the program. So he ducked out of sight, refused to further "protect his home" when O'Brien made an effort to crash through the front door, or to record the events in his notebook, and caused his wife to phone the state police that "Banks would surrender to either Phil Lowd or Schermerhorn." Both officers had been sympathetic with the anarchistic move and might have become accessories after the crime.

Banks had caused the assemblage of several hundred congress members nearby apparently on another ruse, and doubtless was depending on their presence to extricate him from the clutches of the law after commission of the crime. However, the wrong group of inflamed citizens gathered about the house at 1000 West Main and mutterings of "get a rope" filled the air in place of the probably anticipated word that "now is the time to sack the courthouse and take things over for ourselves." Like Banks' own nerve, the congressmen failed to come through at the crucial moment. Hence, Jackson county averted a pitched battle and lost but one officer instead of the two.

Surprising as this explanation of the probable plot which resulted in Prescott's death may be, it is believed to be but a mild forecast of the unbelievable facts which will

be unearthed at the trial of Banks. It has been portrayed for several reasons, chief among which is the lesson Jackson county might learn if it comprehended fully the diabolical extent to which schemes had been laid, and of the condition of almost actual revolution its citizens had permitted to be developed by ignoring or minimizing dangers of criminal syndicalism which had run rampant and almost uncontrolled for months.

It should come home to Jackson county when the full facts are revealed that revolution and anarchy can still be revolution and anarchy even though they are called "good government reform" and "reestablishment of law and order in Jackson county." Naturally the anarchists who really plotted the unlawful and violent overthrow of Jackson county's government mumbled prayers, claimed "God was their helper" and hurled accusations at opposition to dull the senses of followers and to keep their minds so occupied they could not recognize their leaders for what they really were—anarchists and plain every day revolutionists. They even failed to take warning when their honorary president openly announced he "would himself take the field in revolution."

There can be little explanation or excuse for those members who condoned such action unless it was that they were so stupid they believed anarchy had to be preached in Russian, and that revolution could not be revolution unless attempted in Mexico. They kidded themselves into believing that "re-establishment of law and order by violence and firearms was something else—probably a needed remedy to end all the supposed graft."

The Miner wonders, as it did some three months ago, if Jackson county citizens imagine for one moment that the anarchists of Russia, the revolutionists of South America and the traitors of history were not deceived and fooled by just such misleading and untrue propaganda as has been circulated in Jackson county for the past 16 years and more particularly in the past three? Can't they see that the great massacres of Europe probably were caused by just as sincere a desire to correct something or other as our local Good Government congressmen claim? It is superfluous to add that such "spill-

ing of blood" accomplished little but murder and depravity, just as the local war would have.

But, after due reflection and a brief scanning of history, at least Jackson county rebels should give revolutionists and anarchists of other countries credit for at least striking at bad government and making an effort to replace it with a more humane, equitable form. Here in southern Oregon conditions were just reversed. A democracy was being attacked and unscrupulous leaders were attempting to replace it with a crooked, unjust DICTATORSHIP!

Those who would scoff at this interpretation of the recent political turmoil which resulted in murder, thievery and attempted treason against the state of Oregon should recall that The Miner several months ago warned them that bloodshed was ahead, that there would be REAL graft and REAL miscarriages of justice if Banks and Fehl were permitted to continue unchecked. The Miner now reminds them that revolution and anarchy—which certainly were being considered and planned by Banks and several of his closest followers under the guise of "good government"—remote and impossible as they have seemed to normally law abiding and government loving Americans have come mighty close to being a reality and not a threat in Jackson county.

May the citizens take heed and realize the terrific dangers which grow out of unscrupulous and untrue newspaper editorials, the evils of wanton and malicious criminal libel and the power of the press to wreak havoc when the common principles of decency and truth have been ignored.

If you still are not convinced, watch closely the revelations which are bound to be made at the trial of Llewellyn A. Banks and wife for the murder of George Prescott. Weigh the statements which undoubtedly will be made, trace their authenticity and take warning—a surprise is in store for you.

Mr. and Mrs. Frances Corthay of Seattle are spending a 10-day vacation at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Taylor.

Mr. and Mrs. George Hollingsworth of Medford spent Friday visiting the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Forest Raveron.

Seen in a Daze



By OUR KEYHOLE EXPERT

Dan Shuss wearing a straw hat. So that's why it rained every day? Three ought to be a law.

The raw! raw! boys from upstate have been gone 2 wks. now and the local mail has come back up to normal.

Believe it or not, your corr. took part in a square dance one night and actually enjoyed the experience.

We heard that our Wed. night gatherings at the Vaughn home, now including both boys and girls, were indecent. Does having a party and good time necessarily mean that the younger generation is going to the dogs instead of Christian Endeavor? No! Several times No!

Al Stewart, the music maker, continues to draw large crowds to the local Sat. dances.

Have you noticed how few times the word depression has been used lately?

This week saw the changing of the Sunnyside A. C. to the Shady-side. Rather warm, wasn't it?

Spring is spring! Cars (?) bearing Calif. license pls appear every twice in a while loaded to the guards.

Business seems to be picking up, at least the fire co. answered two

calls Wednesday, one at 4:30 a. m. and one at 7:30 p. m. And then there are those who think the organization is needless.

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