

Parents Gather at Rectory To Learn Fate of Children

Chicago—UPI—"Does anybody know anything about my little boy?"

The slender woman in the camel's-hair coat walked into the little candy store across the alley from Our Lady of Angels rectory Monday night. She looked hopefully at Terese Gorski, who works part time at the store after school. "Does anybody know anything about my little boy?" she repeated, this time giving his name and grade.

Terese, one of the children who escaped the blaze that killed more than 85 of her schoolmates, replied she thought everyone in the boy's class escaped.

Taken To Rectory

A policeman walked up to the woman and, speaking softly, led her to the rectory where the Red Cross had set up a missing children's desk. She took her place in line with mothers and fathers who had come to look for their children.

"We'll notify you as soon as we learn something," the heavy-set man with the small mustache said, taking names and telephone numbers.

The men and women paraded before him in all manner of middle-class street attire. Their accents were Polish, Italian, Irish and just plain midwestern American.

"We'll notify you as soon as we learn something," the man said to each parent, trying to make it sound a little different each time.

Thousands Watch Ruins

They nodded silently, then stepped outside into the milling throngs. Flood lights still bathed the brick school building. Thousands of people had gathered to look at the ruins. Except for the broken windows, the firehoses and the aerial ladders it looked like a parish carnival.

A ladder rested a couple of feet from the cross atop the school. Firemen, policemen and newsmen stood in little groups around the building, occasionally looking up at it.

Across the street, beyond the ropes, stood the curious—

shoulder to shoulder and 10-deep at spots. They didn't talk, just looked.

Parents made their way through the crowd, then stopped at the church with its drab exterior. Inside, it was beautiful and still.

Boys Questioned In School Fire; No Suspicions

(Continued From Page 1)

Deputy Chief of Detectives Frank Pape and his squad questioned two 13-year-old boys during the night. He said the boys, Daniel O'Shea and Patrick Machaj, told of carrying rubbish to the basement shortly before the fire broke out.

Authorities sought a third boy who was in the basement with O'Shea and Machaj, and planned to question other boys assigned to carrying the trash to the basement.

"It would seem to me that some youngster was smoking down there and flipped the cigarette away when he heard someone coming," Pape said. However, he emphasized that no one was under suspicion at the moment.

FBI Offers Cooperation

"At the present time the origin of the fire is still undetermined," Pape continued. He said it didn't "make sense that a child would set the fire deliberately" and then return to his class room.

The FBI offered its cooperation in the probe in the event investigators turned up evidence of arson. Authorities said they had not ruled out arson as a possible cause.

Sgt. Drew Brown of the arson detail said the thick smoke, at first believed to have been oil, apparently came from thick wax on the school floors.

Flames Spread Quickly

He said the flames spread quickly when second floor windows were opened by panic-stricken youngsters seeking an escape route and sucked the smoke and flames up through the stairwell to the upper floor.

He said the fire could have been smoldering for some time in tightly packed papers under the stairwell before it broke out. The building had only one outside fire escape.

Heroic nuns and men who dashed into the burning building from the street helped to save most of the 1,300 children in the school. Firemen carried down others on ladders from upper floors.

A crowd of 10,000, many of them hysterical parents, swarmed around the burning building. They had to be restrained by police cordons. The officers wept openly.

Worst Since 1903

It was the worst school fire in Chicago's history and the city's most tragic blaze since the Iroquois theatre fire killed 575 persons in 1903.

The school, formerly a church, is located in Chicago's teeming West Side in a neighborhood made up largely of working people of Italian, German and Irish descent.

In recent weeks, a number of Chicago schools have had bomb threats and scares, tied in with Negro-white integration. There were no Negro students in Our Lady of the Angels.

Vatican Shocked By School Fire

Vatican City—UPI—News of the disastrous fire in the Roman Catholic elementary school in Chicago was received with shock and deep sorrow in the Vatican today, a high church spokesman said.

Pope John XXIII was informed of the fire by Secretary of State Cardinal-elect Domenico Tardini during the customary morning audience.

Before withdrawing to his private chapel to pray for the victims the Pope instructed Cardinal Tardini to wire papal condolences to Msgr. Albert Gregory Meyer, archbishop of Chicago.

The secretary of state also was instructed to wire the apostolic delegate in Washington, Cardinal-elect A. Pietro Cigliognani, asking that he leave immediately for Chicago or send an emissary to convey the Pope's sorrow to the families of the victims.

A Vatican source, commenting on arson rumors, said "it does not seem possible that anyone could take such action against innocent children. We refuse to believe this and we are inclined to think that it was an accident."

Parents Gather at Chicago Morgue In Attempt To Identify Children

Chicago—UPI—A morgue attendant gently lifted a sheet from a charred body and said, "this is a boy."

John Jakowski Sr., leaned over, looked intently at the lifeless form and screamed. "Oh, my God, my boy, my boy."

Upstairs in the crowded main hall at Cook County Morgue, a deputy coroner intoned into a megaphone: "We are looking for the parents of an 11-year-old girl with a medal and cross about her neck. She wore a full school uniform with long black stockings. She can be identified."

A little woman in a tan coat cried out then sobbed uncontrollably into the ends of her scarf.

A blue-clad student nurse guided the woman to a seat in a smoky meeting room. A policeman led her husband past 20 other anxious parents and relatives and down the long steps to the bodies in the basement.

Difficult To Identify

In the noisy lobby, Vincent Mucci tugged at the sleeves of coroner's deputies and newsmen—anyone with a slip of paper in his hand-seeking word of his niece, Elaine Polesi.

"She's 9," he said, "wearing red bobby sock and black suede shoes. My brother and I were taken down into that hell-hole to see if we could find her. My brother thought one body was her's, but I didn't. I don't see how anyone can identify anyone down there."

Hours later, Elaine's name was posted on the official death list in the Our Lady of Angels school holocaust.

The small bodies, covered

Boy, Thinking How He Would Look Dead, Rescued by Firemen

Editor's note: Tommy Raymond, 12, a seventh grader, was trapped for 24 minutes in his second floor classroom at Our Lady of the Angels school. Here is his story.

By TOMMY RAYMOND As Told To UPI

Chicago—UPI—I hesitated on the window sill thinking about jumping—and how I would look dead—when firemen shouted to me to wait and they'd save me.

Most of my other classmates had got out and I was the last one. But when I walked into the hall the smoke was so thick I ran back into the room. I ran to a window in the room and threw some books out through the glass to break the windows. It's funny, but I remember the books—my reader and some text books.

Thought About Jumping

After the window broke I got on the sill and began thinking about jumping. That's when the firemen down below started shouting at me not to jump, but they'd come and get me. So I got back off the sill.

Now that I think back to when it started, I remember we were having a singing lesson. We didn't know anything about the fire until all of a sudden we heard a lot of screams. We couldn't make out what the screams were for a moment, then we knew it was the eighth graders yelling "Fire, fire, fire."

We started leaving the room like we had practiced in fire drills. You know we had two or three fire drills already this winter because this is an old school and somebody always figured it was going to burn down some day.

For a while I was all by myself in the room and then some girls came running in. They were from another room. I yelled at them to lie down on the floor, because that's what I remember from fire drills to do when there's a lot of smoke.

Kids Form Line

The girls said kids from other rooms were hanging on one another's belts to form a line to get to the stairs because the smoke had made it as dark as night on the second floor. A man came run-



RUSSIAN PROPOSAL—Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev stands before microphones, speaking at his first news conference held in the Kremlin. In his speech, Khrushchev outlined Russia's proposal that West Berlin be made into a demilitarized free city. He said the proposal is not an "ultimatum."

Four Children Perish in Fire

Snyderville, Utah—UPI—Four children burned to death early today when fire swept their two-story frame farm home in this tiny community three miles northwest of Park City in the northeast section of Utah.

The victims were Christine, 8, Paul, 6, Mart, 4, and Rex, about 2, sons and daughters of Dale and Betty Durrant.

The fire apparently started from a small space heating stove in the kitchen of the home. The house was heated by a coal furnace in the basement but it was not believed to be the cause of the fire.

Durrant, 28, a farmer, had made the fire before beginning his morning milking chores. Mrs. Durrant, 25, was still in her bedroom when she smelled smoke.

She said the doorway leading to the rest of the house was blocked by flames by the time she reached the kitchen. She then ran outside in her nightclothes to find her husband.

Both parents ran back into the house but were unable to reach the ground floor bedroom where two of the children had been sleeping and could not climb the stairway to the upstairs bedroom where two other children perished.

Portland—UPI—Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) will be keynote speaker at the Oregon Wheat Growers League meeting here Thursday through Saturday.

Idaho Youths Face Sentences

Weiser, Idaho—UPI—Three of four Weiser teen-age boys today faced stiff sentences for their part in a recent crime spree in Idaho and neighboring Washington state.

Larry Eisenbarth, 16; Ross Manser, 16; and Larry Martin, 16, all of Weiser, were sentenced Monday by District Judge Gilbert C. Norris to more than eight years in the Idaho state penitentiary.

The fourth youth, Eugene Coffett, 15, who had shown some remorse for his part in the crimes, received an 11-month sentence in the Washington county jail.

All four were sentenced on a charge of first degree burglary in connection with a break-in at the Midvale market in Midvale in which ammunition, candy and cigarettes were taken.

The sheriff's offices here said the youths also admitted various other burglaries, vandalism and shootings.

Child, 2, Killed When Hit by Truck

Salem—UPI—Nancy Lee Smith, 2, daughter of Mrs. Phyllis Claudine Smith, was killed Monday when struck by a mail truck on Hoodview road in front of a neighbor's home.

The accident occurred just northeast of the Salem city limits, state police said.

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Banker Held On Embezzlement

Los Angeles—UPI—A mild-mannered bank vice president today was held in jail on federal charges of embezzling more than \$800,000 from the Sun Valley National Bank.

John E. Petersen, 49, father of two children, was arrested Monday by FBI agents at his home in nearby Van Nuys on a complaint issued by U.S. Commissioner Theodore Hooke charging him with a false entry in the bank records.

Total bank shortages might amount to more than \$1 million, D. K. Brown, special agent in charge of the FBI Los Angeles office, said. Auditing of the books continued today.

"I don't have any of this money. I'd like to know where it is,"

The former cashier and vice president said he resigned from the bank, where he had worked since 1952, about 10 days ago at the request of bank officers when federal bank examiners noted a discrepancy in the bank books.

Oregon Apple Crop Estimate Declines

Portland—UPI—Oregon's 1958 apple crop is estimated at 2,400,000 bushels, down 700,000 bushels from last year.

The Department of Agriculture's crop reporting service said the 1958 Oregon crop was about 110,000 bushels below the 10-year average.

Washington's 1958 apple crop is down 2,800,000 bushels to 30,400,000 bushels, the USDA said.

Murder, Suicide Charged To Youth

Saddle Rock, N.Y.—UPI—A "quiet, obedient, helpful" 14-year-old boy shot his mother and sister to death Monday night in their fashionable home and then killed himself, police reported.

Three rifle blasts brought neighbors running to the \$60,000 home of Max Weiner, wealthy New York advertising man. They found the body of James Wiener, a junior high school student, lying just inside the front door, a .22 rifle clutched in his hand.

The body of James' mother, Mrs. Dorothy Weiner, 47, was sprawled at the head of the stairs leading to the split-level bedroom wing. Laurie Wiener, 27, James' sister who taught art at a nearby high school, was found dead in the basement. Chief of Detectives Stuyvesant Pinnell said, it was obviously a double murder and suicide.

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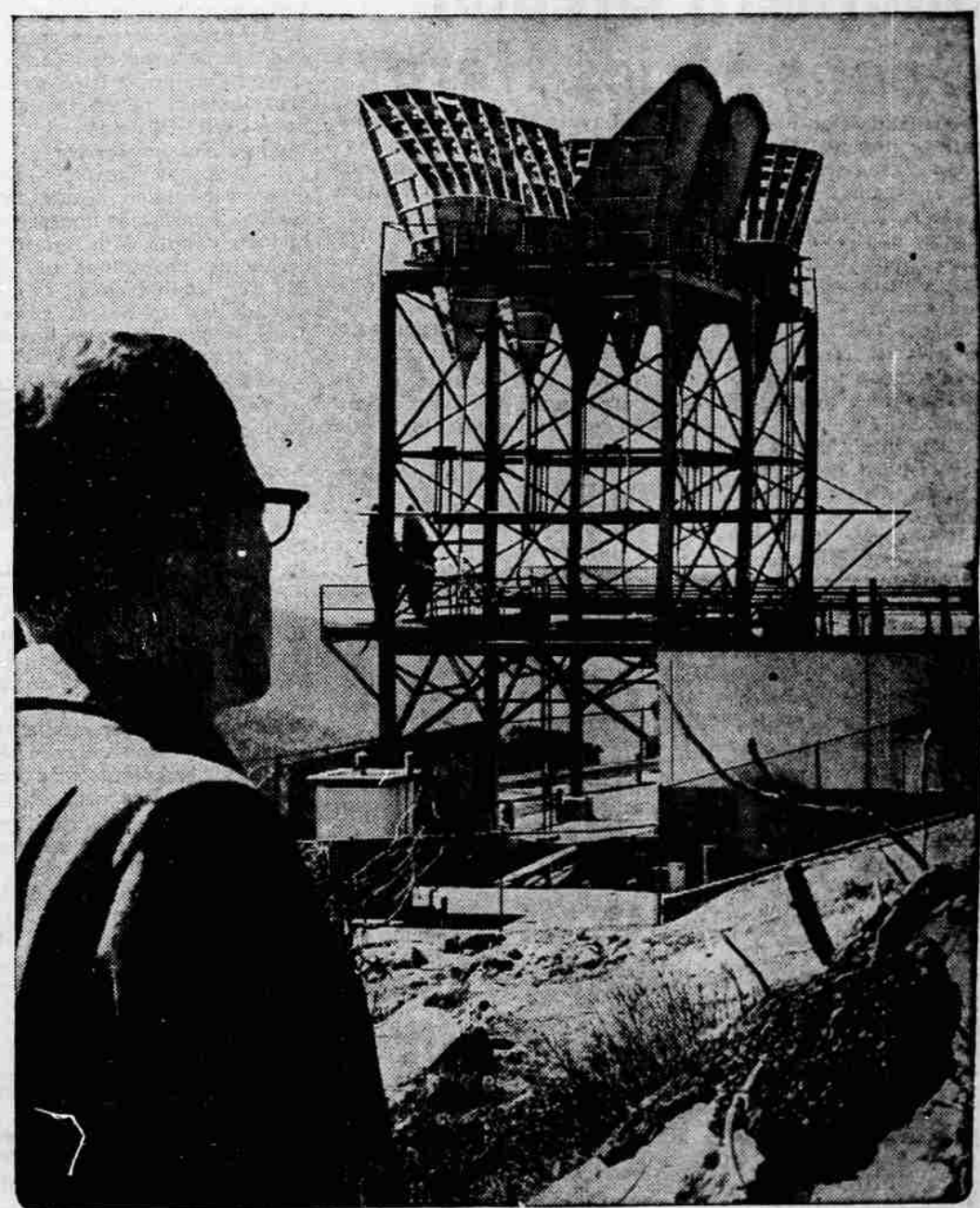
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