Classified Ad In NY Newspaper Proves A False Clue In Mystery Of Missing Police Commissioner

Editor's note: A tiny classified ad in a suburban newspaper last week caused a flutter of activity. Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, believing they had a clue to the mysterious disappearance of missing Police Commissioner Leroy Fox, converged on the county seat in Mineola.

United Press International dispatched a special reporting team, headed by UPI roving correspondent Jack V. Fox, to the scene. The report by Fox and reporters Thomas D. Zambo and Fred J. Ferguson follows.

By UPI
Special Reporting Team

Mineola, N.Y.—UPI—The finely printed classified ad was in an unusual position. It stood out among the news stories on page 5 of the newspaper.

And for a few hours it provoked an unusual furor.

It seemed to portend a break in the great mystery of the missing Long Island police commissioner. If there is one case the police of sprouting suburban Nassau county are determined to crack, it is the disappearance of their own boss.

The ad read:

"Personal-To my confidential caller who knows I have gone away for a month. Please call me P.I. number between 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. any day Monday through Friday. Ask for Mr. Z. The money is ready and all security agreed upon will be observed. Time is important."

Those words rang bells all the way to the offices of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

For it was a month ago that 62-year-old John Beckmann vanished after dropping his wife at a beauty parlor and presumably heading for his job directing a 2,000-man police force-second largest in New York state.

The allusions to both "money" and "security" and the mysterious telephone instructions fitted into theories that Beckmann might have been abducted-that the most widely accepted theory of suicide was not right, after all.

NEW LINER—The SS Oriana, a 40,000-ton new queen of the Pacific, arrived at the Los Angeles-Long Beach harbor last week. The world's newest passenger liner, it is the largest now operating in the Pacific. (UPI Telephoto)

Then the excitement melted as rapidly as it had built up. The ad turned out to be a device of an ingenious newspaper seeking to get a "scoop" on Beckmann's whereabouts from an anonymous tipster who had telephoned previously.

But it brought back into sharp focus the "impossible" disappearance of a man who had spent a lifetime breaking just such cases.

John Beckmann was a big man, hard to miss. Ruddy of face and white-thatched, he stood 6 feet 1 inch and weighed 215 pounds even though he had taken off 30 pounds in recent weeks on a rigid diet.

Despite a yearly salary of $17,500, he had lived with his wife, Florence, for 21 years in the same two-story red brick house at 153 Fonda rd. in Rockville Centre.

It is one of the developments that had engulfed Long Island in the last generation, neater and more individual than the blob of box conformity that is Levittown, but a far cry from the vast old estates of the Vanderbilt and Theodore Roosevelt clans.

To his neighbors on Fonda rd., Beckmann was a gregarious kindly man, who liked nothing better than a curbstone chat. Few of them still believe he took his own life by jumping into the icy waters of an Atlantic inlet.

To his men, he was a cold, aloof taskmaster. But he was never reproached for his effectiveness as a cop. He had held the commissioner's job for 15 years and, as an aide remarked, "he never thought he was running in a popularity contest.

"Police work was his whole life and just about everything that he talked about."

To Miss Haircut

It was 8 o'clock on the morning of Friday, Jan. 6, that Beckmann started out with his wife in their 1959 Oldsmobile. When he dropped her off at the beauty parlor, he remarked he had decided not to get his usual Friday haircut, but would go straight to his office.

At 8:28 a.m. his car passed through the toll gate leading onto Meadowbrook Parkway out to famous Jones Beach, packed with millions in summer time but nearly deserted on the biting January morning.

The toll gate keeper remembered only one man was in the car. He did not recall whether it was Beckmann. He knows the exact time because it was stamped on the county pass handed him for free passage through the toll gate.

Just 12 minutes later Dwight Crowl, a bridge foreman for the Long Island State Park Commission, stopped alongside the Oldsmobile parked on the middle of a causeway over the surging tidal waters of Sloop Channel.

The car was empty. In the glove compartment were Beckmann's wallet and the .32 caliber service revolver he usually carried on his person. There were no notes, only a letter his wife had given him and which, like many a husband, he had forgotten to mail.

The circumstances might have pointed clearly to suicide-a leap into Sloop Channel-except for the fact that Beckmann seemed to have no reason whatsoever for taking his life.

His physician, Dr. Harvey L. Myers, had given him a complete checkup two weeks before. Beckmann was pronounced in good health except for slight high blood pressure.

He apparently had no money problems. The commissioner had access to two department funds-police benefits and petty cash. Audits in December had shown no irregularities.

Although they were childless, Beckmann and his wife had been a devoted couple. She had long suffered from a serious cardiac condition. A priest broke the news of her husband's disappearance. She has never accepted the idea of suicide.

"He lived for his job. And I know he was happy in it," she said. "He had been down full recently except for mild irritability because of his diet pills, but we had a fine time at Christmas."

Skin divers have gone down into the bay and sines have dragged it without finding the body. Officers point out that Beckmann's car was driven over three other bridges-from which he could have leaped.

Received Sealing Report

On the day before his disappearance, Beckmann received a report on a charge by an 18-year-old burglary suspect that county police had beaten him. The report, in which the charge was denied, was delivered personally by Beckmann to County Executive Hollie Patterson. Patterson denied a report that he had asked or been offered Beckmann's resignation.

Nassau police have sent out a 17-state missing persons alarm for their commissioner.

That is still the status of the case-a missing person. There still is some belief that Beckmann may have suffered an attack of amnesia. Kidnapping is not ruled out.

The ad in the Long Island newspaper, Newsday, seemed at first to bear out the kidnaping theory.

But what had happened was this. A man had called the newspaper four times from Jan. 27 to Feb. 2. He said Beckmann was alive and in the vicinity and he could lead a reporter to him.

The newspaper became convinced the man was not a crank, but whenever it tried to pin him down to an appointment to go find Beckmann, the tipster shied away and asked for more time.

The newspaperman the tipster talked to on each occasion left last week on a long-planned Puerto Rican vacation. It was his own month's absence he was referring to in the ad. The money was the reward he promised the caller for a scoop.

There's been no response to the ad. Police are skeptical. They say they have checked out 100 similar tips and all have proved groundless.

But this is one case that won't be marked closed until Beckmann is found-dead or alive.

4,500 Scouts Are Attending Church As Part of Week

Approximately 4,500 boys, members of Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Explorers, are attending church today to mark Boy Scout Sunday.

Today marks the end of Boy Scout week which has been observed by the council which includes Jackson and Josephine counties in Oregon and Siskiyou county in California.

Scouting is essentially religious, but nondenominational, its leaders point out. It is a strong supplement to the work program of more than 42,000 churches of all denominations throughout the country.

Awarded Recognition

Since the inception of the church awards program in 1939, 171,500 Boy Scouts and Explorers have been awarded church recognition by their own religious leaders. Almost all of the 823 Boy Scout camps have regular chaplain service. A staff chaplain is available at the Crater Lake council summer camp all summer.

The summer camp program at Camp McLoughlin at Lake of the Woods in Klamath county is one of the main scouting activities in this area. It has been used for five years. Campers usually stay for one week of the total six weeks program.

Scouts receive training in boating and swimming, woodlore and take a regular hike each year.

Civic Activities

Civic activities form an important part of the year-around Scouting program. Crater Lake council Scouts have been active in get out the vote campaigns, planted thousands of young trees and are always available for other services.

As part of its citizenship training program, the executive board of the Crater Lake council invited outstanding Scouts to participate in a program called "run your council." Each executive board member invited one of his outstanding Scouts in the council area as his guest for dinner and the regular board meeting in Hotel Jackson on Feb. 8.

Each Scout selected represented his host on the executive board and made his regular report to the assembled group.

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7 Saws in One Versatile!
Reg. $20.00 $14.88

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Kill summer crabgrass now with one application of HALTS!
One Sack, 2,500 Sq. Ft. Halts $9.95
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Transforms ordinary leaky faucets into attractive, water-saving, splash-free, U.S.A.-made faucets. Models from 98c

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Tony Manno's ACME HARDWARE CO.
SPECIALISTS IN HOMEWARES!
245 S. Central at 10th • Phone SP 2-5201

GIFTS that say Be my VALENTINE

Drop in anytime and see our selection of Valentine gifts, candies and cards! Please her with a gift of toiletries or perfumes from our list of famous brands (see our list below) or a beautiful box of fine quality chocolates!

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★ REVLON ★ JACQUELINE COCHRAN ★ ANJOU
★ HELENA RUBINSTEIN ★ MARY CHESS
★ JEAN NATE ★ BLANCHARD ★ YARDLEY
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There's Still a Wonderful Selection of HALLMARK VALENTINE CARDS!

All Sizes of Boxed VALENTINE CHOCOLATES
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101 No. Central at 6th • Phone SP 2-6253
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NEW ADMIRAL Refrigerator Reg. 229.95 With Trade $169.88
NEW ADMIRAL Upright FREEZER Reg. $269.95 $169.88 With Trade
NEW ADMIRAL RANGE Reg. $189.95 $138.88 With Trade
23 Ft. ADMIRAL FREEZER 890 lb. Capacity, Reg. 529.95 $299.88 With Trade
5 Pc. DINETTE Reg. $59.95 $48.88
NEW 3-PC. SECTIONAL Red, all foam, shop worn $188.88
REG. $11.95 FOLDING CHAIRS $6.88
Wide Choice! Desk Lamps $16.95 Values $9.88
Sale Starts NOON TODAY

Chance of a lifetime!
9x12 LINOLEUM RUGS Regular $6.95 $3.88
WALL-TO-WALL CARPET As low as $3.98 sq. yd.
7 Piece DINETTE SET Regular $99.95 $69.88 Sale Price!
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SALE STARTS SUNDAY at 12 o'clock NOON
Come early, be one of the first smart shoppers to take advantage of the discounts!

2-PIECE LIVING ROOM SET
Bed Daveno and Matching Platform Rocker!
$99.88 Regular $159.95 VALUE

ALL SALES FINAL! (No sales to dealers)
Bring Your Trailers and Trucks!

Buck Graves says: "We Must Make Room for NEW ARRIVALS!!"
"Everything on the floor is rummage . . . and it must be moved! Most items are brand new and perfect 1960 merchandise—but we have to make room for '61 shipments. Everything is drastically reduced! Drive out today . . . cart home the savings!"
IF IT'S FURNITURE OR APPLIANCES YOU NEED—SEE BUCK!

LIKE A THUNDERBOLT!! $120,000 FURNITURE AND APPLIANCE STOCK SLASHED!
STOCK RUMMAGE SALE!
PRICES SLASHED ON OUR TREMENDOUS INVENTORY OF NEW FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES!!! EVERYTHING GOES!!!
"WE MUST MAKE ROOM FOR NEW MERCHANDISE"

NO DOWN PAYMENT on Approved Credit
$5 HOLDS Any Purchase
EASY TERMS We Handle Our Own Accounts
Everything Sold "As Is"
Our Location Saves You Money!

Bring the family, Shop Today!
Simmons Hideaway Bed Was $239.95 $139.88 With Trade
Maple MILK STOOLS SPECIAL!! $1.99
Bedroom Set Mr. and Mrs. Dresser, Matching Chest, Night Stand, Bookcase Headboard Bed, Footboard and Rail 199.95 Value $139.88

3-pc. LAMP SET • 2 table lamps • 1 floor lamp $39.95 VALUE $19.88
Folding Chairs Regular $5.95 Value $1.99 LIMIT 4 TO A CUSTOMER
2-PIECE SECTIONAL All Foam Rubber Reversible Cushions! $159.88 Regular $269.95
Early American Maple BEDROOM SET Chest, dresser with tilting mirror, bookcase headboard, footboard and rail. $129.88 Regular $199.95
3-PC. SET COFFEE TABLE & END TABLES $19.88 Regular $39.95
SOFA PILLOWS 98c Regular $39.95

Odds and Ends TABLES $1.99 and up
Contemporary Extra-Length Davenports Foam Reversible Cushions STORE-SOILED $99.88 3 to Choose
KITCHEN SERVING CARTS Reg. $16.95 $9.88
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USED FURNITURE—APPLIANCES
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Large Used Bookcase Headboard $9.88
2 Used Electric Ranges As Is, You Haul ea. $10.88
Used 9x12 Rugs $9.88
New 9x12 Bedroom Rugs $12.88
Used Coffee Tables & End Tables $12.88
Used 21-Inch TV Set $39.88
Used 14-Inch TV Set $49.88
Used Maple Bunk Beds With Mattress! Like New, Was $89.95 $49.88
Like New 3-Pc. Living Room Set $49.88
Used Platform Rocker $16.88
Used Dinette Set 6 Chairs and Buffet $49.88
Like New 3-Pc. Living Room Set $119.88
Like New G-E Dishwasher $139.88

★ REPOSSESSED FURNITURE ★
Like New BEDROOM SET Was $169.95 $88.88
Like New • Mattresses • Box Springs • Innersprings $9.88 ea. & up

NIGHT STANDS All Colors, Maple and Modern Reg. $19.95 $6.88
POLE LAMPS Your Choice $8.88
BEDROOM PICTURES 88c
Unfinished DESKS $14.88 and Up
Unfinished Bookcase BED Regular $29.95 $19.88
Twin Size Innerspring Mattress & Box Spring $19.88 EA.
Large Size Innerspring Mattress & Box Spring $24.88 EA.
Large Selection PLATFORM ROCKERS Were $39.95 $27.88
SALE STARTS NOON TODAY!
Big Selection Choice of Covers RECLINING CHAIRS Were $59.95 $39.88
3-Pc. FOAM SECTIONAL Reg. $289.95 $199.88
Maple Drop Leaf Dinette Set 4 Chairs—Was $139.95 $99.88

GRAY'S FURNITURE BARN, INC.
Open Today--Noon 'til 6:00
Hiway 99, Central Point
Sale Starts Sunday -12 noon

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Log Brands Need To Be Renewed, State Reports

Salem—Anyone in western Oregon transporting logs by highways or railroads or who dumps logs into its waters is required under law to mark each log with a brand which is registered with the state forestry department in Salem, according to State Forester D. L. Phipps.

Brands are registered for five-year periods, then they must be renewed. The renewal period established by law is from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 1961, at which time renewal forms will be sent to all those having registered brands. Prior to this time, however, applications for renewal cannot be accepted.

Logging operators desiring to register brands may request applications by letter from the office of state forester, post office box 2289, Salem.

Contain Name of Brand

The letter must contain the name under which the brand is to be registered and the address and a drawing of the proposed brand. This drawing is essential in determining whether the brand is available.

Should the proposed brand not meet registration requirements or be found to be a duplication of a brand already registered, suggestions will be made by the department for revisions that will make it acceptable and the request returned to the operator for approval.

Upon approval of the proposed brand, registration application forms and instructions are sent to the operator. The application form requires an actual imprint of the brand from the finished hammer.

Problem in Devising

Since there have been more than 6,169 log brand registered to some 6,881 operators since the law became effective in 1943, the operator now applying has a problem in devising a brand which will not duplicate one of these already on file.

Changes in the present law are now being considered by the state legislature to broaden the combination of symbols that can be used for made brands. Assistance in preparing the log brand is also given in the form of a *log brand directory* that is available for inspection at various state forestry, forest protective association and national forest headquarters throughout western Oregon.

The directory should be consulted by the operator as he designs his own brand prior to writing for an application. The directory is available in Southern Oregon at the Cave Junction guard station; the state department of forestry offices at Grants Pass and Medford; and at the Prospect ranger station.

Boundary Board To Consider Move

The Jackson county school district boundary board will consider transferring the Gilbreath property from Butte Falls district to Eagle Point district, County Judge Earl Miller said Friday.

The Butte Falls school board wrote the county court protesting the Jackson County School District Reorganization committee's earlier recommendation that the property be transferred. It is located one mile east of the Crowfoot rd. and 300 yards from the old Derby school, which was consolidated with the Butte Falls district.

"Any such recommendation at this time is not within the jurisdiction of the reorganization board and the property should not be transferred one piece at a time," the Butte Falls board wrote.

"Consolidation or reorganization of Butte Falls and Eagle Point districts should not be considered. Complete boundary or property should be changed between districts."

The Butte Falls board recommended the Deen property as the boundary line since it would provide a natural terrain division.

The school district boundary board is composed of the three members of the county court and County School Superintendent Alf B. Mekvold. After considering the problem, the boundary board may call a public hearing.

IN DAD'S SHOES

Carson City, Nev. — UPI — Richard Christensen, 14, of Sparks, Nev., got a chance to fill his father's shoes Thursday. He was one of 132 Nevada Boy Scouts who took over the reins of state government for a day, and was assigned to sit as speaker of the assembly, a post his father holds at the current session of the legislature.