

Supreme Court Declares State Prayer in Schools Illegal

Former Marine Confesses Slaying Two Young Girls

Morris Plains, N.J. — James Vance Jr., who broke down and admitted the brutal slaying of two young girls, told police he was driven into a homicidal fury when one of his victims called him a liar.

The 18-year-old ex-Marine who was honorably discharged from the service after receiving psychiatric treatment, Sunday confessed to murdering the two Morris Plains girls, Noreen Buckley, 17, and 15-year-old Margaret Ann Kennedy.

Police said it was Margaret Ann's charge that Vance was a liar that sent the slender crew-cut youth into a rage and triggered the crimes.

In his confession, Vance insisted the girls had asked him to drive them home from the Colonial Luncheonette in Morristown last Wednesday, the night of the slaying.

Delay Noted for Highway 238 Traffic

Traffic will be delayed for periods of up to one hour Wednesday, June 27, on Highway 238 between Jacksonville and Applegate, according to representatives of the Oregon State Highway department.

Crews will be moving telephone poles preparatory to the rebuilding of the highway.

The work could possibly continue into part of Thursday. Provisions will be made for emergency vehicles, it was explained.

300 Pound Bear Killed

Hillsboro — A 300-pound black bear, which wandered into a strawberry patch was shot and killed at Art Hendrickson's farm on Dixie Mountain Saturday.

Police Captures Hospital Escapees

Arlington, Ore. — An Oregon state police patrolman captured five escapees from the Eastern Washington State hospital at Cheney after a high-speed chase west of Boardman early Sunday.

Patrolman T. Haven Jones spotted the five in a car stolen from Medical Lake, Wash., going west on U.S. Highway 30 and gave chase. The fugitives, all from the maximum security ward of the hospital and considered extremely dangerous, pulled their car off the road and attempted to flee through the sagebrush.

Jones had all five rounded up by the time help arrived. They were held in the city jail here for Washington authorities.

State police identified the men as Clarence Thomas, Richard Humphries, Donald Ballou, William Reid and Lawrence Braun. They escaped Saturday afternoon.

Move To Bring Thornton Into Probe Criticized

Salem — A Republican state representative from Multnomah county criticized the attempt to inject Atty. Gen. Robert Y. Thornton into the Camp Withycombe investigation as "cheap" and "politically motivated."

Rep. Bob Chappel (R-Portland) criticized the suggestion made Thursday by State Rep. Richard Eymann (D-Mohawk) that if Gov. Mark Hatfield did not call Thornton into the investigation it would be tantamount to a "whitewash."

Thornton is the Democratic nominee for governor against Hatfield.

Last week, Hatfield ordered the state police to investigate the disappearance of \$8,000 worth of property at Camp Withycombe, an Oregon Military Department reservation in Clackamas county.

Chappel, a Portland city police detective, said Eymann's suggestion was a deliberate attempt to interject politics into the matter.

"Obviously Eymann lacks confidence in the elected officials of his own party, specifically the district attorney and sheriff of Clackamas county," Chappel said. Both the D.A. and sheriff are Democrats.

Chappel said while the law does not give the attorney general power to conduct a criminal investigation on his own, "there is sufficient power in the statute for the attorney general to consult with, advise, or direct the district attorney if he is interested."

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Justice Hugo L. Black wrote the majority opinion and said that "by using its public school system to encourage recitation of the Regents' Prayer, the state of New York has adopted a practice wholly inconsistent with the establishment clause (of the First Amendment)."

He said the court agrees with the contention of parents who opposed the practice that the establishment clause was violated because the prayer was "composed by government officials as part of a governmental program to further religious beliefs."

With spectators in the court room sitting in rapt attention, Black cited the words of James Madison that "it is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties."

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Black said, "It has been argued that to apply the Constitution in such a way as to prohibit state laws respecting an establishment of religious services in public schools is to indicate a hostility toward religion or toward prayer."

"Nothing, of course, could be more wrong," he said.

But he added: "It is neither sacrilegious nor antireligious to say that each separate government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning official prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance."

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Agricultural Official Admits Proposal For Estes To Keep Cotton Allotments

Washington — An Agriculture Department official has admitted recommending against his better judgment that Billie Sol Estes be allowed to keep his cotton acreage allotments, Secretary Orville L. Freeman said today.

The official is Thomas H. Miller, acting Southwest area director of the department's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. He made the recommendation to the direction of a superior who since has resigned.

Freeman said he had ordered that Miller be reprimanded.

No Direct Penalty

A department official said the reprimand does not carry any direct penalty. He said it would become a part of Miller's employment record and would be considered if Miller came up for a promotion or transfer.

At the same time, an assistant secretary of agriculture in the Eisenhower administration denied that he ever contacted anyone in the department in behalf of Estes.

The former official, James A. McConnell, told House investigators he "never even heard" Estes' name mentioned while he was with the department.

As for Miller, Freeman said in a statement that the official now states that the recommendation he made was "contrary to his own judgment, and that it was made at the direction of Emery E. Jacobs."

Jacobs, former deputy administrator of the department's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, was Miller's superior at the time. Jacobs resigned April 3 after testimony in Texas linked his name with the Estes case.

The House investigators called McConnell to check on charges of a link between Estes, Commercial Solvents Corp. and the Agriculture Department.

McConnell became an officer of Commercial Solvents Corp., New York, after he resigned as assistant secretary in December, 1955. He said the first time he heard of Estes was at a Commercial Solvents board of directors meeting Nov. 24, 1958, when "the board passed on a proposed line of credit for Mr. Estes."

Previous testimony by company witnesses before the investigating subcommittee showed the firm loaned Estes \$900,000 late in 1958. Estes used \$225,000 of the loan to go into the grain storage business. He used the remainder in connection with his fertilizer operations.

The subcommittee is trying to find out if Estes received favored treatment from the Agriculture Department in his grain storage operations. It also will look for possible conflict of interest.

Estes received his financing in grain storage — money to buy grain elevators — from Commercial Solvents Corp. The firm also sold Estes millions of dollars worth of fertilizer and extended him millions more in credit.

Protest Boat Sails For Testing Area

Honolulu — The pacifist protest boat Everyman II and its faithful companion, a Coast Guard cutter, sailed the Pacific Ocean today headed for the fringe of the U.S. nuclear testing area at Johnston Island.

The cutter was there to make sure the Everyman and its three-man crew stays out of the danger zone. The Coast Guard had orders to keep hands off unless the 28-foot ketch ventures within the test area.

Dr. Monte Steadman, San Francisco, skipper of the Everyman, said he would sail to the edge of the Johnston Island zone and not beyond. He and two other Californians, C. George Benello, Berkeley, and Franklin Zahon, Pomona, are making the voyage to protest U.S. nuclear testing.

Salem Man Heads Legion Department

Seaside — A. C. Friesen of Salem was elected department commander of the Oregon American Legion organization Saturday.

Friesen, an employee of the State Tax commission, succeeds Charles Draper of Albany.

Norman Happel of McMinnville was elected vice commander.

Re-elected were Tom Stoughton of Portland, finance officer; Morton Booth of Albany, chaplain; and Percy Freeman of Portland, historian.

About 5,000 persons attended the state convention.

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