

Thompson, Lawyer, On Trial For Murder



police said. Thompson was arrested at 1:30 a. m. on June 21 at his est Lake. He has been free on Anderson, a marine corps vet- crackerjack roofing salesman Mastrian, who has a college police record, remain in jail in eran of the Korean war and a between drinking bouts, and journalism degree and a long lieu of \$100,000 bond.

ON TRIAL FOR MURDER—Lawyer T. Eugene Thompson, a veteran lawyer at 35, went on trial Monday as a defendant. He is charged with the first degree murder of his wife, Carol, an heiress whose life was insured for more than \$1 million. Thompson is accused of ordering the assassination of his wife, shown in this photo. (UPI)

By RICHARD McFARLAND United Press International MINNEAPOLIS (UPI)—Lawyer T. Eugene Thompson, at 35 a veteran of courtrooms and murder trials, stars in Minnesota's courtroom drama of the decade.

Not as a lawyer, Tilmer Eugene Thompson is on trial on a charge of first degree murder. The state of Minnesota will ask a jury to believe that Thompson plotted, masterminded and ordered the assassination of his wife, Carol, an heiress whose life was insured for more than \$1 million.

Thompson, one of Minnesota's rising young experts on criminal law, will face his accusers in a small Heanepin County courtroom in Minneapolis' towering, 57-year red granite courthouse. He will plead innocent.

His battle for vindication—and the state's battle to prove him guilty—could rank with Ohio's Sheppard case and California's Finch-Tregoff trial as a classic of courtroom suspense.

Slain In Home
On March 6, Carol Thompson, 34, attractive mother of four children, was beaten and stabbed to death in her home.

Thompson is one of three persons charged with murder in the case. The state charged Thompson asked Norman Mastrian, 39, his college classmate and a former prize fighter, to line up a killer. Mastrian, it is charged, hired heavy-drinking salesman Dick W. C. Anderson, 35, to do the job.

Thompson, then main figure in the case, is boyish-looking and has his blond hair trimmed in a crew cut. He had been making up to \$40,000 a year.

He met his wife and Mastrian when he was going to St. Paul's MacAlester College on the GI Bill of Rights. He got his law degree from William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul.

Thompson became a protege of one of Minnesota's most famed criminal lawyers, A. Jerome Hoffman. He married Carol and the couple settled down in the quiet, well-heeled Highland Park section of St. Paul across the Mississippi River from Minneapolis.

Father-in-Law Helps
Thompson's father-in-law was Otto Swoboda, plumbing contractor reputed to be worth a million dollars. Swoboda did his best to get his son-in-law off

to a good start and tossed law business his way.

Thompson became an active member of the Minnesota Bar Association. At the association's convention at Duluth last summer a criminal law committee report was read urging greater support of the state crime bureau. It was signed "T. Eugene Thompson."

Thompson wasn't at the convention. He had been arrested on a murder charge a short time earlier.

The setting for Thompson's trial is a small, mahogany-paneled courtroom seating only about 60 persons. One hundred newspapers and radio and television stations have asked for seats to cover the trial, but there are only about 15 seats available for reporters.

Change of Venue

The trial originally was scheduled to be held in St. Paul. But Thompson's attorneys demanded a change of venue. They contended that publicity of the case in St. Paul made a fair trial there impossible. The state supreme court ordered it be moved to Minneapolis.

Key persons in the trial besides Thompson: County attorney William Randall of St. Paul—47, a tall, slender "Lincolnesque" prosecutor regarded as one of the Republican party's chief prospects for state office in Minnesota. He has been Ramsey County attorney five years. When the trial was moved to Minneapolis, Randall vowed that wherever the trial was held he would prosecute and win a conviction.

Hyram Segell—Chief defense attorney. Segell, 41, 6-2 and 170 pounds, is a graduate of the university of Minnesota and has been practicing law 15 years. He was public defender in St. Paul and worked three years in the U. S. Attorney's office in Minneapolis-St. Paul before going into private practice.

Judge Rolf Fosseen—The trial judge. He is a handsome, graying, broad-shouldered man who played football in high school and still has an athletic look. Fosseen was with the Federal Bureau of Investigation for three years, then practiced law and was municipal judge from 1948-1950 before being appointed to the District Bench.

Botched Job
The slaying of Mrs. Thompson was a horribly botched job. On the morning of March 6, the youngsters had gone to school and Thompson had gone to his law office. Mrs. Thompson had gone back to bed.

The killer apparently had been hiding in the basement. When Mrs. Thompson was alone, as police figure it, he caught her in her bedroom. She was a hard woman to kill.

The killer had planned to dump her, unconscious, into a bathtub filled with water to stage an accidental drowning. But Carol fought for her life.

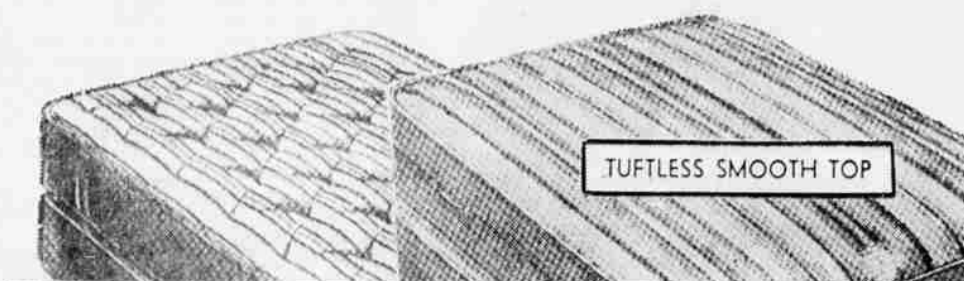
As police reconstruct it, the killer put a German Luger pistol to her head but it wouldn't fire. She ran downstairs and he grabbed her and beat her with the pistol until it broke. Then he stabbed her—again and again—with a paring knife from the kitchen. The blade broke off in her throat.

The killer went to the bathroom to wash his hands. Meanwhile, Mrs. Thompson staggered barefooted out into the snow. She went to a neighbor's house and gasped for help. The killer apparently returned to the living room, was terrified to find Mrs. Thompson gone, and fled.

Pistol Revealing
Pieces of the German Luger pistol led to the arrests. Police learned the pistol had been stolen from a Minneapolis apartment. The burglars were captured and said they sold the gun to Mastrian and cab driver Sheldon Morris. Those two men were arrested and Anderson was arrested in Phoenix, Ariz. Morris and Anderson talked.

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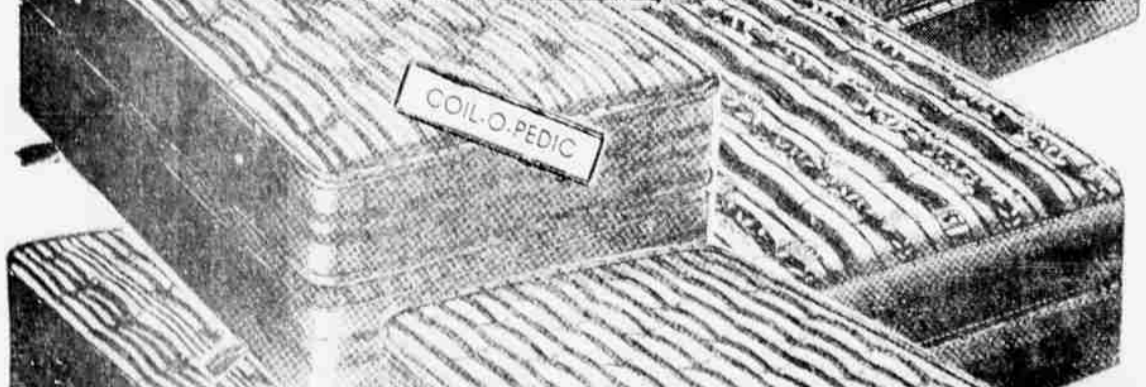
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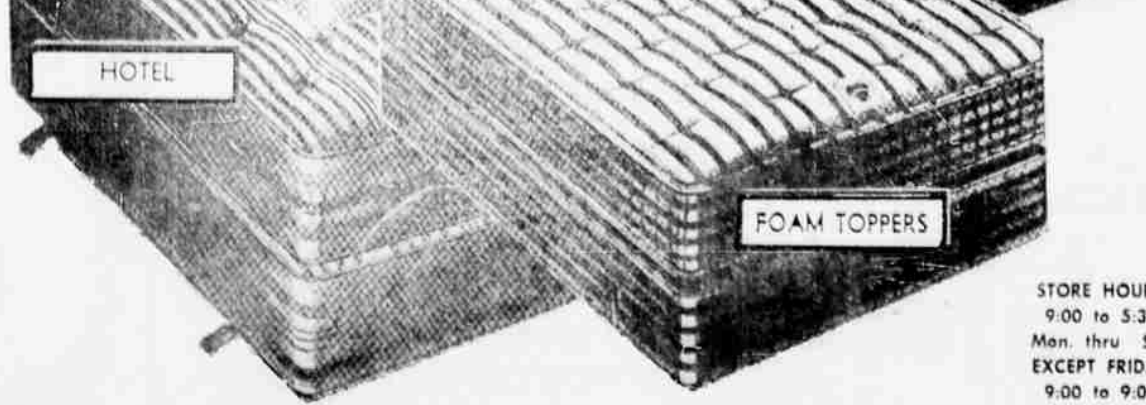
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Korth Appeals for Nuclear Engines In All Major Ships

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Retiring Navy Secretary Fred Korth Wednesday fervently appealed to Congress to provide for nuclear propulsion in all major warships of the future.

He said this country should stop "hamstringing our new ships... with obsolete engines." "I can think of no more urgent and important plea I could make," Korth said. "What you decide here will go far toward determining the size and shape of American seapower for decades to come."

Korth, who resigned effective Nov. 1, made his statements in a last official appearance opening congressional hearings on the subject before the Joint House-Senate Atomic Committee. He emphasized that he was referring to future decisions. He urged against delay of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara's decision last weekend to build another conventional aircraft carrier, even though he favored a nuclear powered flat-top.

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