

Court Reverses Conviction For Libel

SALEM (AP)—The Oregon Supreme Court Wednesday reversed the criminal libel conviction of Julius Kerekes of Baker.

The court said Kerekes had written a letter to the Baker city manager, accusing the Baker police and particularly the chief of having ransacked and robbed his home and menaced him with a gun in front of his children and neighbors.

Kerekes proved at his trial before Circuit Judge W. F. Brown that he had sought and had been refused audience by both the city manager and the district attorney before writing the letter.

The Supreme Court said the city manager's duties include general supervision of the police department. It said there was some evidence in support of the truth of each of the statements made by Kerekes.

"Where a private citizen addressed a written complaint to a public official concerning a matter within the addressee's area of responsibility, the defense of qualified privilege is available in an action for libel, civil or criminal," the court said in an opinion by Justice Alfred T. Goodwin.

"In cases in which privilege is an issue, malice is not presumed from a published falsehood, but must be proven," the court said.

The opinion said that because the circuit court failed to instruct upon this element, the judgment was reversed.

Other rulings included: Mable Harris and Martha Pfeiffer, appellants, vs. Archie Harris, Appeal from Umatilla County, A vs. Peter C. Westenskow and Faith J. Westenskow, appeal from Union County, A boundary line suit, opinion by Justice Gordon Sloan.

William W. Wells was affirmed but modified so both parties can share equally in the cost of a survey.

President To Make Last Try

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Eisenhower administration will make one last bid for new wheat legislation and for continuation of its soil bank land retirement program.

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson told a news conference Tuesday President Eisenhower will recommend — probably in his message on the state of the union early next month — that Congress pass a wheat bill designed to halt present overproduction and reinstate the soil bank program.

Benson said also Eisenhower will urge Congress to enact a sugar control law to replace the one now scheduled to expire March 31.

Benson did not say what the specific Eisenhower recommendations in these three fields will be.

Benson said he probably will leave to his successor the task of setting 1961 farm price supports.

Products for which supports have not yet been set include cotton, other feed grains, soybeans, cottonseed, flaxseed, dry beans, peas and dairy products.

The incoming Kennedy administration is committed to higher supports than those favored by the Eisenhower administration.

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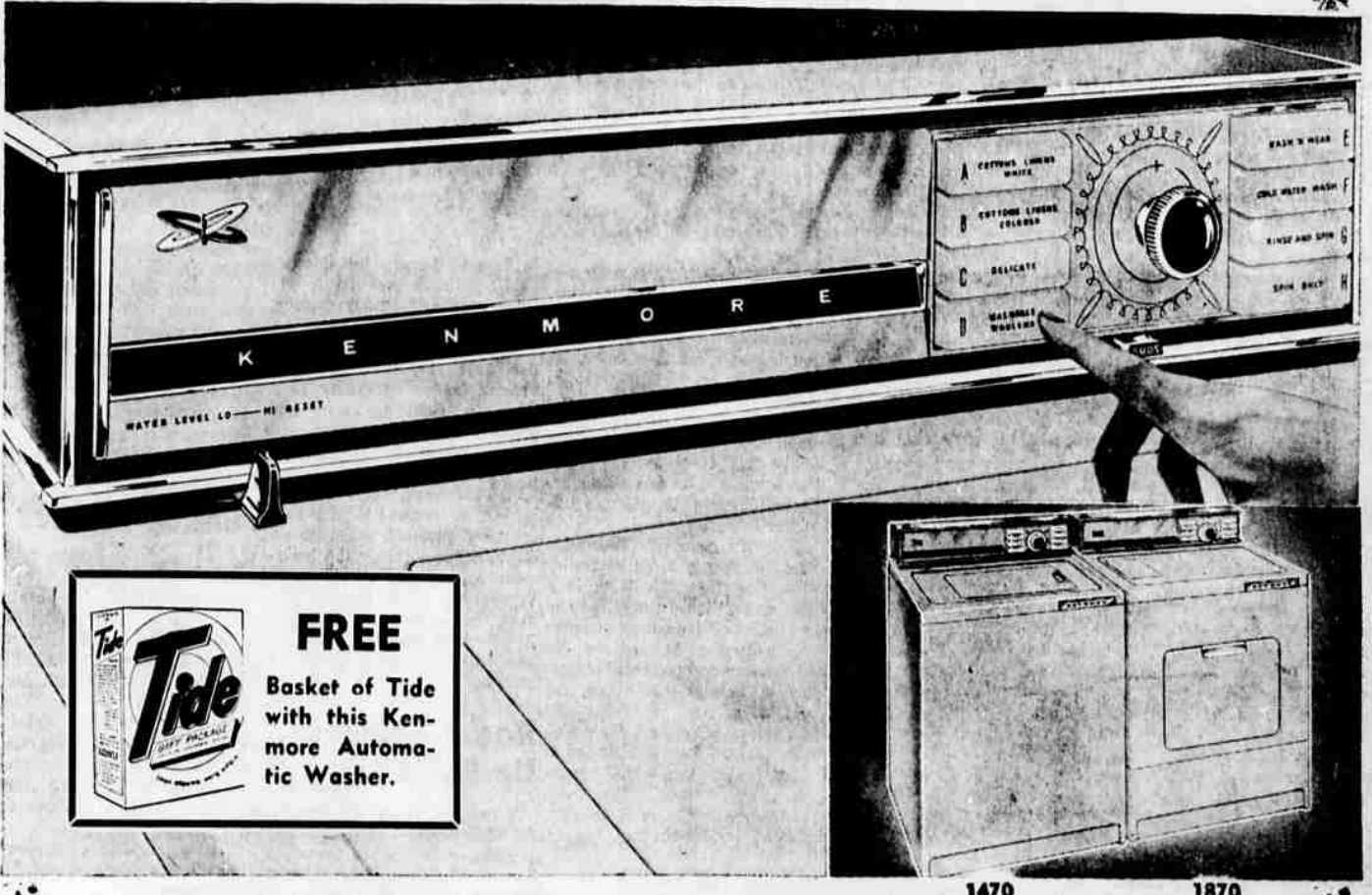
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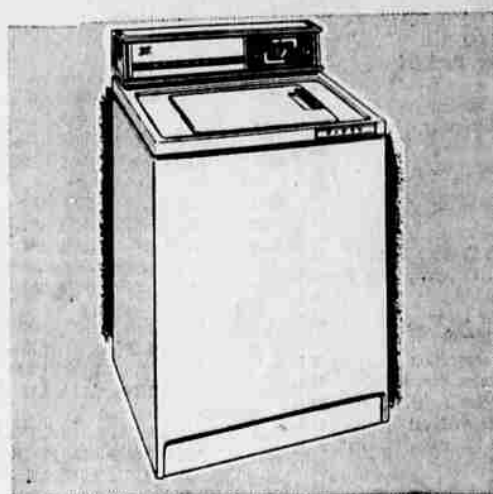
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