

Peace Officers Pool Efforts To Fight Check Artists



SUSPECT BOOKED AT CITY JAIL—Deputy Summers and Detective Lilly search their prisoner before booking him at the city jail, starting the county's judicial machinery which will move the defendant through an arraignment, perhaps a trial, and possibly a jail or prison sentence. District Attorney Dale Crabtree stated that next to petty larceny more money is lost annually to the American public through check writing offenses than any other crime committed in the United States. To help local merchants avert some of these losses, the district attorney's office is sponsoring a Check Seminar, to be held May 2 and 9 at a place to be named later. The course is designed for merchants and employees who handle checks and is to include as instructors Sgt. Clare Alderson, handwriting expert of the Oregon State Police at Salem; a representative of a local bank; and officers of the city police and sheriff's office. The course will include three hours of instruction during each class.



BUNCO SQUAD SIGHTS IN ON CHECK PASSERS—A two-man bunco squad, comprised of Sergeant Detective Dennis Lilly of the city police and Deputy Del Summers of the Klamath County Sheriff's Office, has been established by the district attorney's office to combat an increasing number of fraudulent check cases which have been reported in the county since last year. The squad was set up last March. Since then, more writers of fictitious checks have been prosecuted than ever before. In addition, the unit is quickly processing a backlog of check cases that had been gradually building up since before the squad was organized. In a typical case, Deputy Summers, left, and Detective Lilly, right, begin investigation of a worthless check complaint with the comparing of signatures on several fraudulent checks submitted to police.



OFFICERS SEEK INFO FROM SALEM—The bunco detail leaves the bank and goes to the Klamath Falls Police Department to send a teletype to Oregon State Police at Salem requesting information about the maker of the checks. Mrs. Bernice Matteson, city police clerk, transmits the information to Salem, setting in motion the identification department of the state police which seeks a clue to the identity of the check passer by referring to its voluminous records. The department maintains a file which catalogues more than 200 different handwriting characteristics used in writing checks. Frequently, the file will disclose the identity of a fictitious check writer by the style with which he writes the amount of the check, the date, or some peculiarity of the numbers. Sometime later, the officers receive a reply which lists a suspect and states his habits and description. The bunco detail, which meets twice weekly with the district attorney to pool information, adds the name to a list of wanted check passers and leaves the station to go their separate ways in seeking the suspect.



BUNCO SQUAD ACTS ON TIP—While investigating another case, the bunco detail receives a tip that the suspect is still residing in Klamath Falls. Lilly and Summers trace the bogus check writer through an automobile parked on Klamath Avenue and wind up the case with an arrest. A final report outlining the investigation is prepared by either Diane Coy, sheriff deputy, or Sue Diller, secretary in the district attorney's office. The report and other details of the case go to District Attorney Dale Crabtree, who arranges for the prosecution of the defendant.



91 CHECK CASES SINCE JANUARY—Detective Lilly holds a stack of police reports representing 137 check cases investigated by the city police during 1962. The smaller stack represents 34 cases investigated by the police department since January of this year, not including 57 similar violations handled by the sheriff's office during the same period for a total of 91. The 137 cases handled by city police last year along with 200 expedited by the sheriff's office brings the total number of check cases reported in the county to 337 for that year. The number of check violations could be considerably greater, inasmuch as many cases are not reported. Most worthless checks are made out in amounts of less than \$20.



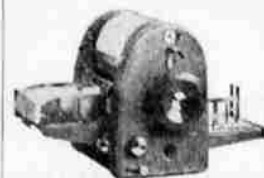
LAWMEN COMPARE PONEY CHECKS—After comparing the signatures, the bunco squad takes the checks to the U.S. National Bank of Portland, 740 Main Street, to compare with several other fictitious checks which turned up there. Observing the style of writing on the bank drafts presented by Deputy Summers and Detective Lilly are, left to right, City Police Chief Charles Howard and Bob Mason, assistant manager of the bank. Before the bunco detail was set up, the city police department and the sheriff's office worked on check cases separately. As a result, if sometimes occurred that the two law enforcement agencies would be working on the same case, unknown to the other. Establishment of the special squad has eliminated duplication of effort on check cases in the sheriff's office and city police department and enabled law enforcement officials to crack down harder on check passers.

FLYING FINN
HELSINKI, Finland (UPI)—Pole vaulter Pentti Nikula cracked the world record in his specialty three times on Feb. 2, soaring to a new height of 16 feet, 8 1/4 inches.

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Use Of Convict Labor Seen Saving State \$1.5 Million

SALEM (UPI)—Restricting the use of convict labor could cost the state's general fund \$1.5 million next biennium, the Senate Public Buildings and Institutions Committee was advised Monday night.

Sen. Edward Fodeley, D-Eugene, is author of a bill which would prohibit a convict from working outside the institution where he is confined. He said it was designed to establish a "policy" on the use of convict labor and clear up conflicting statutes now on the books.

Nick Peet, secretary of the Board of Control, said at present 150 convicts are now doing work for other state institutions.

Organized labor supported Fodeley's bill.

AFL-CIO Political Director George Brown said organized labor did not believe convicts should compete with free labor in major building projects.

Labor's suit to halt use of prison labor at a new women's prison was recently thrown out of court.

Brown said organized labor was "ready, willing and able to work with the Board of Control to see that prisoners can have an opportunity for employment after release." Brown said he could see no objection to such a program. The committee took no action on Fodeley's bill.

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