

ay They Paid Protection

Witness Declares Ex-Chief Accepted Graft Payments

Two Union Heights moonshine dealers testified in U.S. District Court this morning that they paid members of the county police force for protection.

Solomon Ford, who said he had been in the liquor business for about ten years, said former Chief Julian T. Williams, one of 21 persons on trial, took a freezer box from him when he got behind on his protection payments.

He testified this morning that he owed the former chief \$150.

He said he paid protection by borrowing money from the chief, and paying \$125 more than he borrowed each month. He took the freezer to the chief's house, he said and later, he said, Williams gave him money to make a final payment on the freezer.

Ford also testified regarding an incident in which his truck turned over near the Navy Yard gate. On this occasion the truck was released to him on promise to pay \$200 to Sgt. Milton W. Johns. When he failed to pay, Sgt. Johns took back the truck.

On cross - examination, defense lawyer E. F. Hollings read three signed statements about the incident made by Ford, all of which differed in content.

One of them, made, Ford said, in Chief Williams' office, denied that any payoff or even promise of payoff had been made, and that he was making no payments for protection to Chief Williams.

Ford said this morning that, "Mr. Williams fixed this statement to clear himself."

He also said that the chief sent another officer after him, and that he was forced to lie on the back seat of a car to avoid being seen while he was brought to the county police chief's office.

At about the same time, he said he made another statement to Sheriff Chester N. Perry, in which he stated that he had promised to pay Sgt. Johns to release the truck, and a little later, he made another one to deRossett Myers, law partner of defense lawyer Edward H. Pritchett, saying that he knew nothing about whisky in the truck, and didn't know why the law was holding the vehicle.

Ford said he made the last statement "to get my truck back."

This morning, Ford testified that he failed to appear before County Council regarding the incident, on the advice of Sgt. Johns.

"He told me to get as far out of town as I could," he testified.

Ford also testified that Norwood West delivered whisky to him on numerous occasions, and that Chief Williams had also delivered whisky to him at times.

Mr. Hollings, on cross-examination, read from the transcript of an earlier hearing in the case, during which Ford said that Williams delivered to him on one occasion near Thanksgiving of 1951. This morning, he testified that West made this particular delivery.

The other witness this morning was Levinia Washington, who testified that she operated a small restaurant in Union Heights during 1951, and said she paid former county policeman Thomas Pierson \$12 a week for protection. The protection applied only to him, she said, and other officers continued to raid her, "every Friday night."

She said, on cross-examination, that she only sold about three or four jars of whisky a week, for a profit of \$3 a jar, but didn't make enough money to "even fix the screen doors."

She testified that she quit selling whisky because she could not afford to pay protection, and was working as a housemaid and nurse at present.

After she quit paying protection to Pierson, she testified, her place was raided, and she was ordered to appear in a magistrate's court.

On this occasion, she testified, she confronted Officer Pierson, saying "Didn't you used to come in my place and see whisky and not see it?"

Pierson's reply, she testified, was, "Who, me?"

The government will probably complete its case tomorrow, special prosecutor Claud N. Sapp Jr. announced in U.S. District Court yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Sapp made this announcement after he eliminated three witnesses from the list of 50-odd summoned by the government. One other witness, City Police Detective N. C. Adams, was called to the stand for brief questioning after the recess, then dismissed, along with former Detective Kelly Miller.

Cross - examination of Harvey J. Grooms continued yesterday afternoon, with questioning centered around an indictment on a liquor transportation charge, with a guilty plea signed by Grooms.

The indictment involved an incident during which Grooms was picked up by county police, while, according to his testimony, he was hauling a load of non - taxpaid whisky for defendant Harry Chasereau. Grooms testified that he was not charged in connection with the case.

On cross - examination, he admitted that he had signed the guilty plea, but said that he did not do so in court. "I signed some



DUCK PHOTOGRAPHERS—With faces shielded from photographers, Mary and Matthew Barger are led from a Cleveland, O., courtroom after they were found guilty of manslaughter in the torture punishment death of their six-year-old niece, Celia Barger. The three-judge court sentenced the pair to from one to 20 years in prison. Celia died as a result of torture and beatings inflicted by the couple, the prosecution charged. (NEA Telephoto.)

Martin Urges Reduction In Excise Taxes

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Joseph W. Martin Jr. (R-Mass) said today he hopes Congress can act this year to cut all excise or sales taxes now above 10 per cent down to that level.

Congressional staff authorities have established such a move would reduce revenues about 942 million dollars a year.

But Martin said he believes increases in sales and employment under the spur of such a tax reduction probably would prevent any actual revenue loss.

Martin said he didn't expect the Eisenhower administration to propose any excise tax changes. But he said he hopes the economic situation will be such that the administration will not fight such a move by Congress "when the time comes."

The proposed cuts would apply to furs, jewelry, cosmetics, luggage, women's handbags, movie and other admissions, photographic equipment, light bulbs and tubes, safe deposit boxes, and club dues, now all taxed at 20 per cent.

Ike Promises Full Probe Of Coffee Prices

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Eisenhower said today the Federal Trade Commission will make a full scale investigation of rising coffee prices.

The President told a news conference the commission launched a preliminary inquiry Jan. 13 and already has discovered enough to warrant a full investigation.

Such an inquiry, he added, is going to take place.

Retail prices for coffee have lately jumped above \$1 a pound and wholesalers have predicted a further rise.

The Trade Commission's investigation will be aimed at determining whether any laws have been violated.

The President said the FTC would look specifically into charges that domestic trading in coffee had been limited to certain types.

Earthquake Jolts Town In California

TEHACHAPI, Calif. (UP) — A sharp earthquake jolted this mountainous city early today but there were no reports of damage.

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lier was not a part of the alleged conspiracy at the time.

The recording was thrown out, along with testimony relating to the conversation contained on it, after Judge Ashton H. Williams examined a transcript of it. Collier said on it, Judge Williams stated, that he was out of the liquor business at the time.

A motion by S. S. Seideman, counsel for defendant Harry Chassereau, to have three more overt acts stricken from the indictment, was overruled in yesterday afternoon's session.

Mr. Seideman objected to the motions on the grounds that, although they allegedly took place in 1950, Clarence Jones, the government's only witness to them, testified on cross-examination yesterday that he went to work for Chassereau in December of 1950.

Mr. Sapp said that his witness was confused as to his dates, that he started work in December of 1949 instead of 1950. "I could subpoena his Social Security records to show it," he said.

Judge Williams overruled the motion, and several others on the same line made by other defense lawyers, stating that he was not certain that an overt act could be stricken from a conspiracy indictment by the judge.

Jones testified that he and defendant Pete Howard Altman delivered whisky in a 1950 Oldsmobile for Chassereau, taking it to a "house on Romney Street."

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