

Kemper Backs Death Penalty

Confessed mass-murderer Edmund Kemper, who last November voted in favor of bringing back the death penalty in California, desires to go to the gas chamber and has indicated he could kill again if he is not sentenced to death, a court-appointed psychiatrist revealed today.

That information was revealed at the Kemper murder trial today by a court-appointed psychiatrist, Dr. Joel Fort. Fort is the last scheduled witness to be called by Dist. Atty. Peter Chang, who is expected to rest his case today.

Because the killings with which Kemper is charged occurred before the passage of the state legislature's death penalty bill, he is not a candidate for a death penalty.

Fort, during two hours of testimony this morning, was as critical of the psychiatric profession as he was of the defendant. While exhaustively recounting his qualifications and experience, which include several books, appearances before the U.S. Senate and many state legislatures, Fort refused to identify himself as a psychiatrist in the sense that "I do not have an office practice and limit myself to middle class neurotic women."

Just before the noon recess, Chang asked Fort if psychiatric diagnoses prior were consistent with Fort's opinion that Kemper is legally sane.

"They are consistent both with my diagnosis of the defendant and my diagnosis of American psychiatry," he answered.

The apparent paradox is explained by Fort's testimony that psychiatrists who in 1972 gave Kemper a clean bill of health were accurate, but only as far as they examined. He said the psychiatrists were incompetent due to "a failure to recognize his sexual and violence pathology."

Fort also clung to an earlier opinion that Kemper is not suicidal, although the defendant tried to kill himself early Sunday by slashing his wrist.

"This is not to say it's not possible he could commit suicide," Fort began. He explained the different levels involved in suicide. It begins with the thought, which occurs to many people; continues

Fiery Train Wreck

KINGMAN, Ariz. (AP) — Flames engulfed most of a Santa Fe freight train early today when 19 rail cars jumped the tracks near the village of Hackberry near here, officials said.

Six firemen were hospitalized and may have inhaled toxic fumes but were not burned, a Fire Department spokesman said. He described the fire as "contained but not controlled."

"We don't know what started it. Santa Fe says there weren't any tank cars on the train," said fireman H. B. Marshall. "But something spilled down the tracks and caught all those cars on fire."

He said firemen, hampered by a shortage of water, were trying to work from both ends of the blaze toward the middle.

"We just can't get any water way out there" he said. "We have an 8,200-gallon water tanker, five trucks and a rescue unit there, but we're really short of water."

Authorities said the westbound train, enroute from Chicago to San Francisco, derailed on a bridge a few hundred yards from Hackberry, a village of a few hundred persons along U.S. 66 about 100 miles southwest of the Grand Canyon. Hackberry is 15 miles east of here.

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Kemper Trial Draws Near End

The Edmund Kemper murder trial is now in its final stages, as both the prosecution and the defense will deliver closing arguments to a six-man, six-woman jury Monday.

If the closing remarks are not lengthy, the jury will be given the case to decide Monday. Should the attorneys talk longer than expected, the case won't be turned over to the jurors until Wednesday, because court cannot officially convene Tuesday, which is election day.

Defense attorney Jim Jackson is expected to discuss the mental state of his client. Jackson only called two witnesses — Kemper and the defendant's sister. Despite Kemper's plea of innocent by reason of insanity, no psychiatrists were called by the defense.

Kemper, during taped confessions to lawmen and while on the witness stand Wednesday and Thursday, admitted to slaying eight women, including his mother, over an 11 month period.

Two psychiatrists were called during the trial by Dist. Atty. Peter Chang. They all opined that Kemper was legally sane during the killing spree.