

# Commissioners admit accepting kickbacks

**United Press International**  
OKLAHOMA CITY — Federal prosecutors have won guilty pleas from five former county commissioners who admitted accepting kickbacks or payments from material and equipment suppliers.

The five men pleaded guilty Wednesday in federal court to a single count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud.

In Tulsa, a former Osage County commissioner also pleaded guilty to a kickback-related charge, and a former Pawnee County commissioner has paid \$3,700 in restitution for kickbacks.

The commissioners pleading guilty in Oklahoma City federal

court were Jere Johnson of Garfield County, Isaac Roberts of Jefferson County, Monroe Thompson of Alfalfa County, Ragnol Pickens of Bryan County and Floyd Rudd of Kingfisher County.

The five men had signed plea agreements with federal prosecutors.

Johnson, Roberts, Thompson and Rudd resigned their posts last year in the wake of the federal investigation. Pickens lost a re-election campaign in 1978.

Former Grant County commissioner G. Wayne Northcutt, who also lost an election bid in 1978, was to have appeared Wednesday, but his case was continued.

Former Osage County Commissioner Eldon Grigg faces sentencing March 1 after pleading guilty in Tulsa to a charge negotiated with prosecutors. Grigg, 51, of Fairfax, admitted taking \$5,000 in kickbacks while in office.

He told U.S. District Judge Thomas Brett he received payoff money from Hugh Wein, owner of Keystone Equipment Co. of Sand Springs and Northern Equipment Co. of Enid.

Former Pawnee County commissioner James Lester Thurber, who pleaded guilty Dec. 22 to a kickback-related charge, paid \$3,700 in restitution to Pawnee County, his attorney said.

## Warped



By Scott McCulloch

## Cloth shrouded in mystery

# Coin aids Turin study

**United Press International**  
DURHAM — Using a Byzantine coin and icon, Dr. Alan Whanger believes he has dated the Shroud of Turin eight centuries closer to the death of Christ than any historical record now known.

Whanger, a Duke University professor of psychiatry and amateur photographer, said Wednesday he has used a projector and polarized filters to superimpose photos of the sixth-century coin and icon depicting Christ onto a photo of the face revealed on the shroud, believed

by many to be the burial cloth of Jesus.

The similarities reveal the coin and icon were made by artists who must have seen the shroud, Whanger said.

Currently, historical records date the shroud to 1357, when it was found in France. There is no documented historical record of the shroud before the 14th century.

The shroud, now in Turin, Italy, is a piece of cloth more than 14 feet long and a little over 3 feet wide. It bears the front and back imprint of a man who

was crucified.

Whanger said he had studied a Byzantine icon painted about 590 A.D., now located in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai, and a gold Byzantine coin, about the size of a nickel, issued between 692 and 695 A.D.

"The coin and icon relate with astonishing exactness to the facial aspects of the shroud," he said. "My evidence then indicated the icon and the coins were copied from the facial imprint on the shroud approximately 800 years before the shroud

turned up in France."

Dr. Adam Otterbein, director of the Holy Shroud Project, which coordinated the shroud in 1978, called Whanger's claim a major development in historical verification of the shroud.

"The historical evidence of the shroud has always been the weakest area of that has been done," Otterbein said.

Whanger, while saying he believes the shroud is the cloth of Christ, said his study does nothing to advance the theory scientifically.

# Prosecutors to play recordings of conversations in Brilab trial

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — The government plans to play 80 secretly taped conversations in the latest

Brilab trial in which officials are charged with accepting bribes for influence in awarding insurance contracts.

The conversations involve the defendants, undercover agents and unnamed, undicted co-conspirators from New Orleans.

The recordings may seem like an opera performed in a foreign language because the apparent poor quality of the tapes makes conversations difficult to understand.

As most operas provide programs to follow the story line, the federal government, which is trying the case, has provided transcripts to follow the conversations.

Defense attorneys, claiming parts of those transcripts do not accurately reflect the tapes, have said they plan to give the jury their own version of the conversations.

On trial are Deer Park labor leader L.G. Moore, 47, and Houston Port Commissioner John Garrett, 59 — each charged with one count of conspiracy and two counts of plotting bribes through interstate phone calls.

Although the men charged as co-conspirators were not named in the indictment, Assistant U.S. Attorney Ron Woods has said they are Carlos Marcello, convicted in a separate Brilab case, and lawyer Vincent Marinello, who was acquitted of Brilab charges.

Wednesday the jury heard an idea of how poor the tapes are when they listened to a conversation between Councilman Jim West and an FBI agent posing as an insurance man.

Westmoreland has been charged in the Brilab case with influencing a city council to approve a health insurance contract for city employees.

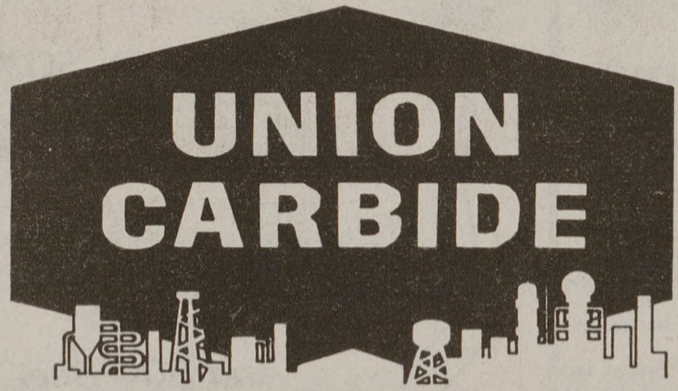
Westmoreland has denied accepting any bribes or being involved in any contract deals.

The city council on Jan. 19, 1979, approved the Brilab insurance policy, the undercover agent later testified in a city investigation report.

The tape recorded a conversation between Westmoreland and a hotel manager in a hotel room on Jan. 11, 1979. Loud Christmas and jazz music in the background drowned out much of the conversation.

But Westmoreland's attorney, Larry Montague, told the jury that Westmoreland's bid is one of the best he can get you in.

No mention of a payoff was made, however.



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SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

RYAN O'NEAL  
7:30 P.M. G

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