

El Paso officers get four acquittals, but guilty of beating

United Press International
EL PASO — There was argument and "a lot of screaming and yelling" among jurors who finally returned a split verdict against two El Paso County Jail officers charged with beating handcuffed prisoners after an attempted jail escape in 1981, jurors said Thursday.

Former jail Capt. Joseph Bowling and former Lt. Horacio Gomez were acquitted on four of the five counts in a federal indictment. But the jury found them guilty of beating and kicking Alan Beck and failing to prevent officers under their command from beating and kicking Beck. The misdemeanor conviction is punishable by a maximum of one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine.

U.S. District Judge Harry Lee Hudspeth set June 18 for sentencing and allowed both men to remain free on bond. "One of the reasons for the

guilty verdict was because no medical care was provided for Beck," said juror Cardelia Sevinsky after the jury was dismissed. "The medical care was the key."

Juror Glenda Yvonne Flores said, "There was never any real, real evidence that they (Bowling and Gomez) got together and conspired to beat the prisoners."

One of the problems the jurors said they faced was contradictory testimony from most of the witnesses. "There was a lot of arguing back and forth — a lot of screaming and yelling — but the final verdict was unanimous," DeeBee Hajjar said.

A visibly choked-up Bowling was critical of the Sheriff's Department investigation into the beating.

Bowling said situations like the beating incident were understandable because of the inexperience and quality of the detention officers he was sent.

Arguments heard for offshore sales

United Press International
WASHINGTON — A House Appropriations subcommittee heard arguments Thursday for and against extending a one-year moratorium on offshore oil and gas lease sales on the Outer Continental Shelf.

All 28 Democrats in the California House delegation support the measure to withhold for another year the money required for the federal government to conduct offshore lease sales in California, Massachusetts and the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Rep. Leon Panetta, D-Calif., said extending the moratorium is "essential" to negotiations

with the Interior Department because compromise is impossible if leasing is allowed in the areas currently under the ban.

Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, opposing the ban, said prohibiting a lease sale "could simply forestall revenues to the Treasury anticipated to offset the deficit, delay the production of desperately needed oil and gas, and delay potentially significant employment in coastal communities."

Alaska is not affected by the existing one-year moratorium, but could be included in an extension.

The House passed a moratorium last summer on Interior

Department appropriations for offshore leasing activities this fiscal year, which expires Oct. 1. If extended, the ban would last through Sept. 30, 1985.

In California, the existing moratorium bars leasing off the coast from the Mexican Border north to Huntington and Newport beaches in Orange County, and around Santa Monica Bay and the Santa Barbara Channel, the ecological preserve and buffer zone and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

"In turn, Interior has indicated a willingness to explore possible compromise in this area," Panetta said. "A negotiated compromise regarding exceptional areas deserving of protection is possible."

If the moratorium is not extended, Interior may conduct lease sales

off California and in the North Atlantic in fiscal year 1985, which begins Oct. 1, Panetta said.

Levine testified he is "encouraged" by Clark's assurance that none of the nine leases proposed for sale in 1985 would be those areas under the 1984 moratorium, but has received "conflicting messages from the Interior Department."

Ecuadoran orphan smiles for first time

United Press International
BROCKTON, Mass. — A 5-year-old Ecuadoran orphan girl who once could only smile with her eyes offered a grin and a "gracias" Thursday to doctors who freed her fused jaw using plastic surgery.

Alexandra Balcazar of Quito proudly showed off a music box and teddy bear to a visitor and whispered "gracias" — thank you — to doctors who removed bandages from Tuesday's six-hour operation at Cardinal Cushing Hospital.

The youngster sipped liquids without a straw for the first time and gulped vanilla ice cream for breakfast as doctors slowly worked her up to soft food. "The jaw's working fine," said hospital spokeswoman Susan O'Brien. The menu choice was based on the fact "she never had to digest anything before."

Alexandra's speech and diet were severely restricted because

of a birth defect that fused the lower jaw to her skull. Before the operation, the child "had no movement in her jaw," Dr. Martin Dunn said.

"She is now opening her mouth to a normal amount for the first time in her life," he said. Before the operation Alexandra, who O'Brien described as considerably underweight, had to be fed through a tube in her stomach.

She will undergo physical therapy to develop the unused jaw muscles. Dunn predicted she would probably be eating solid chewy foods such as apples in six weeks.

Alexandra was flown to Boston last week, and the surgery was performed for free under the auspices of the Catholic organization Por Cristi.

Easter pushed sales up for large retail stores

United Press International
NEW YORK — The nation's largest stores Thursday reported strong sales gains in April, pushed by heavy Easter buying.

Purchases of spring clothes headed the sales spurt. Sears, Roebuck and Co., the nation's largest retailer, reported sales for the four-week period which ended April 28 were \$1.96 billion, up 9.8 percent from \$1.78 billion in April 1983.

Chairman Edward R. Telling of Sears said major appliances and men's, women's and children's clothing had strong sales. The second largest general merchandiser, K Mart Corp., said its April sales totaled \$1.5 billion, up 9.6 percent from April 1983.

The No. 3 retailer, J.C. Penney Co., reported April sales jumped 27.6 percent to \$865 million.

"Demand was strong for all merchandise categories, and particularly for family apparel, reflecting traditional Easter shopping," Penney's Chairman William R. Howell said.

The fourth largest non-food retailer, Federated Dept. Stores Inc., reported April sales increased 17.3 percent to \$690.2 million.

No. 5 F.W. Woolworth Co. said total sales in the four-week period ending April 24 rose 16 percent to \$442.7 million. Domestic sales were up 19.6 percent.



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