

2 given terms in smuggling case

by PETER RINEARSON
Times staff reporter

Two men convicted of playing key roles in the celebrated Helena Star smuggling case were sentenced today to five years in prison and fined \$30,000 each.

David Alan Victerson and Eric Alan Hale each were sentenced in federal court to concurrent terms of five years in prison for smuggling marijuana and three years for conspiracy. They were convicted October 5.

United States District Judge Donald Voorhees also imposed a special five-year parole term to follow the prison terms. The men will be eligible for parole after serving three years and four months.

Judge Voorhees declined to impose a 10-year sentence suggested by Ronald Sim, assistant United States attorney. The 10-year sentence would have been possible if the judge had imposed five-year terms on both the smuggling and conspiracy charges, and ordered them to be served consecutively, rather than concurrently.

Attorneys for Victerson and Hale asked Judge Voorhees to impose a maximum term of five years, because they said that was similar to sentences other federal jurists have imposed in other parts of the nation.

Victerson and Hale, both 28 and from the San Francisco area, were arrested after the Coast Guard seized the small freighter Helena Star 140 miles off the Washington Coast on April 17. Authorities confiscated 37 tons of marijuana, apparently destined for this state from Colombia.

The defendants in the case have not attempted to argue that it was anything but a smuggling operation but are expected to appeal their convictions on the grounds that the Coast Guard had no authority to board the boat.

Grant to help handicapped live independently

A \$35,000 grant has been awarded to a nonprofit Seattle organization, to develop an independent-living program for the handicapped.

The grant is to Concepts for Independent Living from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It also is to study possible use of transitional centers for the severely handicapped. This would aid in the integration of such people into community-living arrangements.

Senator Warren G. Magnuson announced the award in a telegram to the Conference on Employment of Handicapped Persons just concluded at the Red Lion Inn, here.

Parliament debate doused with paint

LONDON — (UPI) — A pot of red paint brought business to a halt in the House of Commons yesterday, and a key government debate on the government's 5 per cent wage ceiling had to be abandoned before it started.

A woman spectator in the public gallery capped a sticky evening of frayed tempers and raised voices in the "Mother of Parliaments" by pitching a bundle of political leaflets and a pot of red paint into the august debating chamber.

Several members were splattered with red paint, and the Speaker adjourned the house while the carpet was cleaned. The protester was arrested.

Three men, woman credited with saving lives in apartment-house fire

by DEE NORTON
Times staff reporter

Although two small children died in a Riverton Heights apartment-house fire yesterday, three construction workers and a motorist were credited today with saving many lives in the blaze.

The construction workers — Jim Raybon of Kent, Jerry Miller of Seattle and Brent Thornton — and Tony Matarazzo, 23, the motorist, raced through the flaming building at 9820 Des Moines Way S. yesterday morning, alerting occupants.

District 11 Fire Chief Duane Malo said it has not been determined how many persons were in the four-story building when the flames were reported at 9:35 a.m.

Ms. Matarazzo, driving past the building, noticed the flames and telephoned the alarm, then joined the three men in running through the building, pounding on doors and shouting the alarm.

Ronald Blackmon, Jr., 3, and Michael, 2, died in the fire. They were the only children of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Blackmon. After alerting the occupants, Raybon found the boys' father outside the building and learned the boys were still in the ground-floor unit.

The three men re-entered the smoke-filled building but found the front door of the Blackmons' unit locked. They went into an adjacent unit and kicked a hole in the wall. Raybon found one of the badly burned youngsters in the bathroom and carried him outside, Malo said.

The fire is believed to have started near the front window in the living room of the Blackmon unit, possibly by clothing being placed too close to a heating unit.

Malo said the building was not equipped with smoke detectors. It is one of several older apartment buildings in the district that are not required to have the detectors.

"If I lived in one of them, I'd go marching to the manager and demand that they install smoke detectors," Malo said. "A number of the other older buildings have installed them voluntarily."

The Blackmon unit was destroyed. Damage to the unit above was estimated at 50 percent. Two others suffered heat and smoke damage. The structure's loss was placed at \$50,000.

Jazz festival Jan. 13 at Opera House

Kent-Meridian High School's Jazz Festival VII, featuring Bobby Shew, professional jazz trumpeter, will take place January 13 at the Seattle Opera House at 8 p.m.

Under the direction of Hal Sherman, the school's jazz ensemble has won numerous awards. The group has received an invitation to perform at a jazz festival at Montreux, Switzerland, next summer.

Other participants in the event here, also called the Northwest Collegiate Jazz Festival, include the University of Washington Jazz Ensemble, the Chaffey College Jazz Ensemble of Los Angeles and the Western Washington University Jazz Workshop Band of Bellingham.

Ray Walters of KIRO-TV will be master of ceremonies. All seats are \$3.75, except reserved box seats.

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