

Calif. High Court Hears Appeal of Jailed Newsman

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 28 (UPI)—An attorney for jailed newsman William Farr asked the California Supreme Court today to order him released from custody.

Farr was ordered to jail Monday by Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Charles H. Older after he refused to divulge the names of two lawyers who were the source of a story he wrote about plans by the Charlie Manson family to murder celebrities.

Older's action climaxed an 18-month legal battle over the conflicting rights of reporters and judges. In ordering him to jail, Older called Farr "a martyr without a cause."

Farr attorney, Mark Hurwitz, asked that Farr be freed on his own recognizance pending action by the Supreme Court on a writ, and also noted that Farr has asked permission of Chief Justice Donald Wright to file a supplemental habeas corpus petition with new and additional arguments on why he should be freed from the contempt proceeding.

There was no immediate indication on how soon the high court would act on the requests.

TV Newsman Refuses To Divulge Source

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn., Nov. 28 (AP)—Harry Thornton, co-host of "The Morning Show" on WDEF-TV in Chattanooga, has been ordered to appear at a show cause hearing Dec. 5 to determine if he should be held in contempt for refusing to divulge a news source.

Judge Tillman Grant of

Criminal Court set the hearing after Thornton, who was summoned before the Hamilton County grand jury today, refused to divulge the name of a telephone caller whose remarks were aired on "The Morning Show" Nov. 22.

Thornton said he would go to jail, if necessary, before he would reveal the caller's identity without permission.

The caller, who identified himself only as a member of the grand jury, reportedly referred to a grand jury investigation of former City Court Judge Bennie Harris as a "whitewash."

Harris said in a letter of resignation in September that he was quitting to take a job in industry.

Thornton was ordered before Judge Grant after his grand jury appearance and directed by the judge to reveal the caller's name. Thornton again refused.

Editors Call for Law To Protect Newsmen

ALBANY, N.Y., Nov. 28 (UPI)—The board of directors of the American Society of Newspaper Editors has gone on record favoring a federal law to protect newsmen who wish to keep their sources confidential, it was announced today.

Declaring "the First

Amendment right of the public to be kept informed has been eroded by recent court decisions," the ASNE board urged Congress "to restore this right by enacting legislation to grant unqualified protection to the press in the gathering and processing of news for public dissemination."

It also urged editors and publishers "to support their reporters and take the brunt of the attack on themselves in every way possible as this fight for the public's constitutional rights is continued."

The resolution was announced by Robert G. Fienberg, chairman of the organization's Freedom of Information Committee and executive editor of the Knickerbocker News Union Star of Albany and Schenectady, N.Y.