

Fraud-trial Defendant Says She May Have Been 'Deceitful'

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An Iowa woman on trial for wire fraud admitted Tuesday that she may have been "deceitful" to a Minnesota farmer in discussing with him the nature of her anti-Communist activities.

"But I did it for my personal safety," said Betty McConkey, a 41-year-old Des Moines woman. She is accused of bilking Gustav Kveen, 62, Roseau, of more than \$170,000.

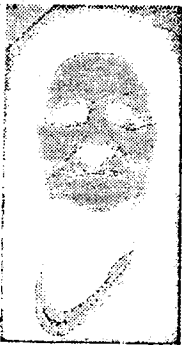
Miss McConkey, on trial in St. Paul federal court, testified yesterday that she led Kveen to believe she would be a witness before a Senate committee in 1968 because she could use the threat of her appearance as a weapon against her "enemies."

However in a day of testimony about her anti-Communist activities from 1958 through 1966, the only time she was injured, she said, was when a woman Communist recognized her at a party meeting and "stomped on my foot when I refused to leave, and her heel went through my shoe."

Miss McConkey said she was recognized because she hadn't had time to obtain her usual disguise when she attended such functions — a

wig, glasses and second-hand clothes she bought from the Salvation Army.

Miss McConkey said she originally obtained money from Kveen and some of his



Miss McConkey

neighbors to probe Communist activity in agriculture, particularly the Farmers Union. But in 1960, she said, her emphasis changed to Communism's effect on youth.

"I told Mr. Kveen I was doing something unusual," she said, "but I didn't tell him exactly what because he'd think it was too great a risk for me. But I didn't think it was."

In addition to attending public functions of the party, she said, her activity centered on trailing Herbert Ap-

theker, a Communist, from campus to campus to observe his effect on young people.

She also dropped in on campus coffee houses, again in disguise, to learn about Communist plans, she said.

Kveen felt "he should have a tax exemption because he was fighting Communism," she said, so she arranged to have the board of the Woodland Community Church in Runnells, Iowa, make her a "home missionary."

Kveen then sent money to the church, she said, and "it was almost all channeled to me," except for the ten percent she gave back to the church as a tithe. The church was founded by her parents, she said.

Part of her communication problem with Kveen arose, according to her testimony, when they developed a "telephone code" to throw off anyone who might be listening, since Kveen had a party line he shared with Farmers Union members.

For example, "if I told him East Coast, it meant West Coast," she said.

"How did you understand each other, then?" asked her attorney, George McPartlin. "We didn't always," she said.

Gen. Edwin H. Walker testified
on her behalf