

'Harrisburg 7' Jury Hears 'Plot' Letter

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) —

A letter describing an alleged plot to kidnap presidential aide Henry Kissinger as a gesture to stop American bombing in Vietnam, was read today to the Harrisburg seven conspiracy trial jury.

Boyd F. Douglas Jr., the government's star witness, testified he received on Aug. 20, 1970 a letter, along with a note from defendant Sister Elizabeth McAlister instructing him to get the letter quickly to the Rev. Philip Berrigan, then imprisoned at the Lewisburg, Pa. penitentiary.

At the time, the 31-year-old Douglas was also an inmate but allowed to go outside the prison to attend classes at nearby Bucknell University. While he smuggled mail to Berrigan, he said he was sending copies of the letters to the FBI.

DOUGLAS testified that the day before, Aug. 19, Sister Elizabeth had telephoned him to be expecting a "very hot letter."

Douglas told the jury that the letter for Berrigan outlined the Kissinger plan. He said the nun's personal note to him said "the enclosed is dynamite and I mean it, and is something no one, and I mean no one, should know about."

Chief prosecutor William Lynch read the letter, with some of the personal references omitted. It said:

"To kidnap—in our terminology, make a citizen's arrest—someone like Henry Kissinger. Him because of his influence as a policy maker, yet sans cabinet status ... to issue a set of demands, e.g., cessation of use of B-52s over North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and release of political prisoners. Hold him for about a week ...

"The impact of such a thing would be phenomenal. The reactions for waiting to do it: it will ultimately be done by someone here and end in fiasco, violence and killing."

Douglas testified that after he received the letter and had read it, he received a telephone call from Eqbal Ahmad, another of the defendants, and named in Sister Elizabeth's letter as the originator of the plan.

Ahmad said he wanted Berrigan's comments on the Kissinger idea, Douglas testified.

Douglas had told of the phone call yesterday in the absence of the jury. He said Sister Elizabeth had told him to destroy the letter if there was any chance he would be detected.

The letter was not read immediately to the jury as lawyers argued over whether Ahmad, had ever telephoned Douglas. Defense attorney Leonard Boudin told the court that unless there was proof of a telephone call, Ahmad could not be proved part of the alleged conspiracy.

THE letter was read today after arguments were concluded. Lynch told the court the "pattern is overwhelming" that Ahmad made the calls

from the Connecticut home of his father-in-law.

Earlier today, a 53-year-old librarian was jailed for contempt of court when she refused to testify.

Mrs. Zoia Horn of Turlock, Calif., who called the trial "a black charade" was sent to Dauphin County Prison by U.S. District Court Judge R. Dixon Herman and ordered held there until the trial ends "or until you purge yourself."

The reluctant witness was the chief reference librarian at Bucknell University in nearby Lewisburg in 1970 when the government alleges the conspiracy was hatched.

Berrigan was imprisoned at the Lewisburg Penitentiary at the time, serving a six-year sentence for destroying draft files in Maryland.

The government says Mrs. Horn was acquainted with Berrigan and also entertained some of the other defendants and FBI informer Boyd F. Douglas Jr. in her home.

She was cited for contempt on Monday but the judge gave her until today to change her mind, and when she didn't, he committed her to jail.

Lawyers for the defense sought to bypass the jailing by suggesting that Mrs. Horn's testimony to the indicting grand jury last year be admitted instead.

Special prosecutor William Lynch rejected the offer, however, insisting that she take the stand and tell the jury in person what she knew. The judge also took this position.