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# Ex-convict: Spence confessed

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A former Texas prison inmate who shared a McLennan County Jail cell with capital murder defendant David Wayne Spence said Friday that Spence confessed to the Lake Waco triple homicides while in jail and "looked like the devil himself" while relating details of the grisly slayings.

"(Spence) told us (other jail inmates) that he did it and thoroughly enjoyed it," said David Puryear, who twice was sent to prison on burglary charges. "He looked like the devil himself standing there talking about it. He looked like he could absorb your soul."

Puryear and two other former pris-

oners who spoke with Spence in jail about his involvement in the July 1982 stabbing deaths of Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice and Kenneth Franks testified during the fifth day of Spence's capital murder trial in 54th State District Court.

Court action bogged down considerably Friday from the pace set earlier in the week because of legal technicalities involved in the testimonies of the former prisoners.

Judge George Allen was forced to excuse the jury of eight women and four men several times throughout the day to rule on the admissibility of the evidence outside the jury's presence.

Spence, 25, who is on trial in Miss

Montgomery's death, faces the death penalty if convicted.

Puryear said that it was common knowledge among inmates that authorities were investigating Spence in connection with the crime, but in initial conversations with Spence, he denied involvement in the slayings.

In subsequent talks, Puryear said that Spence indicated that he had killed the teens, "but didn't know why." On other occasions, Spence confessed to stabbing the victims and said that he enjoyed it.

Spence also told Puryear that he thought he had a split personality and wanted to seek the services of a psychiatrist, he said.

The first time Puryear met Spence, he and Gilbert Melendez were locked with Puryear in a holding cell awaiting arraignment. Spence and Melendez were charged with aggravated sexual abuse in connection with an incident in which Spence held a knife to an 18-year-old Waco man's throat and forced him to engage in sexual acts with Melendez.

"While we were in the holdover tank, Gilbert said that what they had done (to the 18-year-old) was almost as much fun as what had transpired at the lake," Puryear said. "Spence told him to shut up and looked like he was

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possessed by something. He looked like he could have reached out and ripped out (Melendez's) heart for what he had said."

Spence was sentenced to 90 years in prison after being convicted in March 1983 for the aggravated sexual abuse. Melendez, who also faces three capital murder charges in the lake murders, pleaded guilty in December 1982 to aggravated sexual abuse and was assessed a seven-year prison term.

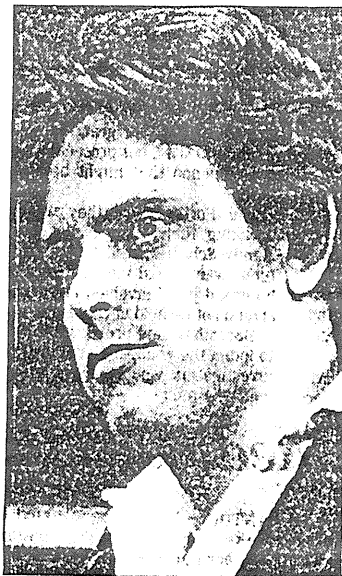
Under cross-examination from defense attorneys Russ Hunt and Hayes Fuller, Puryear said that he was not promised any special favors by prosecutors in exchange for his testimony against Spence.

"I was not promised anything. I have four reasons for testifying — Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice, Kenneth Franks and my 17-year-old sister," he said.

Puryear said that he made a bandana as a present for Spence while in jail and painted a .44-caliber pistol on it and wrote the words "Texas Outlaw," Spence's jail nickname, on it. When Spence saw it, he asked Puryear to amend the gift by painting two girls on it. He said Spence specifically asked him to make one a blonde and one a brunette.

Miss Rice was blonde and Miss Montgomery was brunette.

In other testimony Friday, James Jordan, who was sentenced to four years in prison for possession of mescaline, said



David Wayne Spence

that Spence told him that he "cut the girls" and admitted that he raped at least one of them and sexually abused them with what he called a "whoopie stick."

"One time he told me that he might ought to give it up since he was guilty, because it would go easier on him. He became a lot freer about his confessions than he was before," Jordan said.

Jerry Jennings, who was in jail with Spence before being sent to prison on a robbery charge, said that when he first met Spence, he asked him what he was in jail for, and Spence asked him if he had heard about the "Speegleville Park killings."

"He said if he could have got the money, he would have left the state and never come back," Jennings said.

Prosecutors have said that Spence was offered \$5,000 by Muneer Mohammad Deeb to kill Gayle Kelly, a Methodist Home resident who resembled Miss Montgomery.

Deeb, who took out a \$20,000 accidental death insurance policy on Miss Kelly three weeks before the murders, also is charged with three counts of capital murder in the teens' deaths.

"When we would talk about the lake killings, (Spence) would be acting nervous," Jennings said. "His eyes would be big, there would be a trembling in his voice, and he would shake and pace the floor."

Jennings said he was not promised "a deal" by prosecutors for his testimony, but said that he would return to his cell after each conversation with Spence and make notes about what Spence had said on a legal pad.

He said he made no such notes when he spoke with other jail inmates.

Other former jail inmates who spoke with Spence about the murders are expected to testify when the trial resumes on Monday. Prosecutors are expected to rest their case on Wednesday or Thursday.