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Murder suspect returned to Waco for arraignment

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A former Waco man charged with capital murder in the July 1982 deaths of three teen-agers near Lake Waco was returned Monday to Waco, and another suspect is expected to be brought here this week from Corpus Christi.

David Wayne Spence, 25, was transferred from the Texas Department of Corrections' Eastham Unit in Lovelady, where he was serving a 90-year term for the aggravated sexual abuse of an 18-year-old Waco man.

The only one of the four suspects not in Waco is Anthony Melendez, 24, who is being held in the Nueces County Jail in Corpus Christi under \$25,000 bond on a robbery charge.

Spence, Melendez, Muneer Mohammed Deeb, 24, and Gilbert Melendez, 28, each were indicted Nov. 21 on three counts of capital murder in the deaths of Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice and Kenneth Franks. If convicted, each defendant could be sentenced to life imprisonment or death by injec-

tion.

Deeb was arrested Nov. 14 in Dallas and remains in the McLennan County Jail under bonds totaling \$600,000. Gilbert Melendez, who pleaded guilty in 1982 to aggravated sexual abuse in the same incident for which Spence was convicted, has been in the county jail for about two months. He was sentenced to seven years in prison.

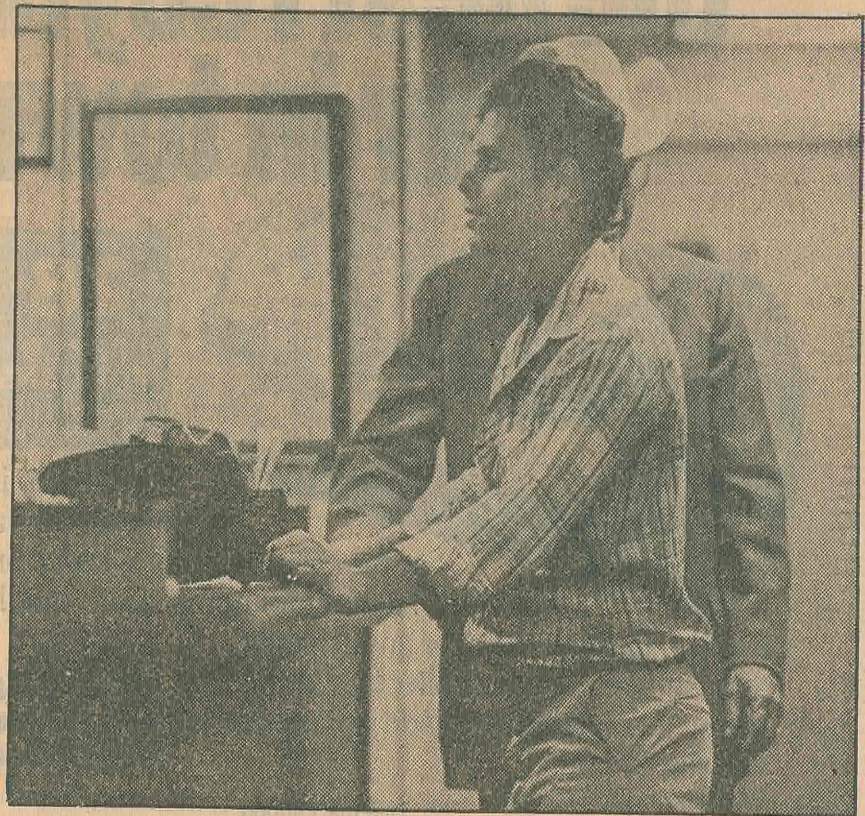
The Melendez brothers and Spence are expected to be arraigned and have bonds set this week, a spokesman in the McLennan County District Attorney's office said.

District Attorney Vic Feazell said last month that prosecutors will attempt to prove that three of the suspects were involved directly in the killings and one "conspired and was instrumental in plotting the murders."

"Murder for hire is a possibility," Feazell said.

Investigators believe the victims were killed at Koehne Park and their bodies dumped at Speegleville Park.

Feazell said the defendants will be tried separately, with the first prob-



Mark Webb Photo

David Wayne Spence is booked Monday into McLennan County Jail

ably going to trial in March. 54th State District Judge George Allen is expected to appoint attorneys this week to defend at least three of the suspects.

County Judge Stanley Rentz has estimated that the four trials will cost the county at least \$150,000, plus appeals costs.

Texas law allows defendants in capital murder cases to have two court-appointed attorneys if they cannot afford representation. Attorneys appointed by the court make a minimum of \$250 for every day in court, but attorneys appointed to this case are expected to be paid at least \$350 a day, Allen said.