

Condemned Slayer Tells Of Death Row

EDITOR'S NOTE: •United Press - Staff Correspondent Robert Klaverkamp was the first newsman to interview condemned slayer Warren "Jack" Nutter, 19, since he has been in death row at Fort Madison State Penitentiary. This is his report.

BY ROBERT KLAVERKAMP
United Press Staff Correspondent
FORT MADISON, Iowa (UP)—A good-looking, 19-year-old boy, who faces the hangman's noose for killing a policeman, sits lonely and bewildered in a death row cell at Iowa State Penitentiary.

But Warren (Jack) Nutter hasn't given up hope that someone, somehow, will spare his life.

The tall, dark-haired youth was condemned for the murder of an Independence policeman a year ago. He originally was scheduled to die this month, but the date was delayed temporarily until the last legal recourse is exhausted.

When that legal hope expires about one month from now, Nutter still will have one final chance—commutation of sentence to life imprisonment by Gov. Herschel C. Loveless.

To while away the lonely hours, Nutter has only some Westerns, a pile of well-thumbed magazines and a radio.

Lone Death Row Occupant

He has virtually no contact with his fellow prisoners in the Fort Madison state penitentiary. He is by himself in the "death row" block of cells. Even the flashing lights of the surrounding city, advertising the pleasures of freedom, are hidden from view.

"It gets pretty lonely, all right," Nutter said with a slight smile.

"I take three steps and I can go from one end of my cell to the other," he said. "It is the smallest cell I've ever been in," reflecting

back on the life which led him to "death row."

The minutes and hours hang heavy for Nutter, but he finds some solace in prayer.

"Yes, I do pray," Nutter said. "I go to church every Sunday." That's the way he was brought up, he said, although he later "fell away" from it.

"The chaplain is my best friend," he said.

The Rev. Lester Peter and the prison athletic director are about the only contacts Nutter has left with the outside world.

Doesn't See Mother

His mother, Mrs. Edith Schoop, hasn't visited him since last November. His step-father didn't even come inside to see him. The only word he's had from his real father was a box of Christmas candies and nuts, some cigarettes and a note saying, "Merry Christmas."

His mother does write once in a while, he said.

"I get two or three letters a week," he said. Two girls write to him fairly regularly. "One is a friend from the sixth grade" back in Freeport, Ill., he said. The other is one of the girls arrested with Nutter after their wild crime spree which ended with the slaying of policeman Harold Pearce Jan. 5, 1956.

"I read mostly Westerns," Nutter said. "But I did read the autobiography of Jimmy Durante." **Thinks About Mistakes**

"I read 'Cell 2455, Death Row' by condemned California prisoner Caryl Chessman, too," he said. He paused. "I'd like to write a book about my life here," he mused.

Most of the time he thinks of the "mistakes I've made" and about his chances for escaping the hangman's noose.

"I hear so many stories about

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my chances, I get confused," he said.

When the time came for Nutter to return to his cell he said he was "glad" of the chance to talk to someone, anyone.

"You're one of the first persons that I've talked to this long in a year," he said.

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