

Amateur Progresses On Coding

A person who claims to be the killer of three young Vallejoans wrote another letter, received by a San Francisco newspaper today, in which he ostensibly writes more details of the shootings. Meanwhile, an amateur cryptogram fan in San Francisco made progress in decoding the three ciphers sent to newspapers while working all Sunday night on them. Authorities also have put a cryptographer to work trying to break down the codes, and are continuing their investigation of the matter despite some skepticism about its authenticity. Vallejo Police Chief Jack E. Stiltz indicated he does not intend to gamble with the lives of any Vallejoans by disregarding even improbable leads.

The latest letter, sent to the editor of the San Francisco Examiner, starts in bizarre fashion by saying "This is the zodiac speaking . . ." It then goes on to give what purportedly are additional details of the murders.

ALLEGES KEY

Also, with a perverse sense of humor, the writer asks whether the police are "having a good time with the code." If not, he adds, "tell them to cheer up; when they do, crack it they will have me."

The additional so-called details provided by the writer failed to convince authorities that he is the actual killer. Chief Stiltz called on the writer to furnish more information which would be certain proof he's responsible.

On the other hand, police concede there's possibility the letter is truthful. The alleged particulars about the shootings at Blue Rock Springs Park, in which Mrs. Darlene E. Ferrin, 22, was killed, and Michael R. Mageau, 19, was badly wounded, may be accurate, an officer said.

Mageau actually "ended up," as the writer put it, outside the car rather than on the back seat, though this might have occurred later.

MANY 'IFS'

The car's description was given to police by Mageau, not a phone call witness, as related in the letter. However, there could have been such a witness near the phone booth.

One officer was very skeptical about the writer's claim of shooting a gun barrel, as he did, touching a signal pencil flashlight to a gun barrel. Such penlights normally give off just a glow, which would not give the beam needed for accurate shooting, he said.

The writer, who again used a sketch of the crosshair telescopic sight of a rifle as his signature, apparently refers to the San Francisco paper rather than to those in Vallejo because he didn't get the front-page coverage he sought there.

The cryptogram fan in San Francisco who is succeeding in decoding the ciphers is a 25-year-old San Francisco State graduate student in marine biology who works on two jobs as a bank teller and a night watchman during the summer.

10 LETTERS

He asked to stay anonymous but he managed to link the letters received by Gibson Publications and the Examiner. He first correlated portions of line six in the former cipher with portions of lines one and two in the latter. He then linked them with lines three and four of the former.

The pattern beginning to take

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GIs Clear Routes To Saigon

SAIGON (UPI)—American infantrymen with helicopter support attacked North Vietnamese troops near the Cambodian border in another operation designed to block any Communist buildup on the approach to Saigon, military spokesmen said today.

Troops of the 9th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade attacked the Communists Sunday as part of a sweep through flatlands near Due Hoa 30 miles west of Saigon. They killed 30 North Vietnamese without any of their own fatalities.

Two Americans were wounded in the six-hour battle. It was one of a long series of offensive operations designed to clear the approaches to Saigon of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese terrorists for an attack on the capital.

Viet Cong terrorists blew up a 210-foot bridge that serves as a principal supply route for the Australian military headquarters in South Vietnam.

U.S. Marines attacked a force of North Vietnamese operating near An Hoa, 24 miles south of the northern city of Da Nang.

Five North Vietnamese were killed and two Marines killed and 14 wounded.

Vietnam fighting was generally light in a lull in its seventh week.

Communist gunners attacked six Allied points with rockets and mortars overnight but none was at U.S. installations.

Seven rockets struck Ba Ria City, a provincial capital 39 miles southeast of Saigon, killing two civilians.

The U.S. command said today 150 troops of the 1st Logistical Army Command, 13th Quartermaster Company would be withdrawn from Vietnam Tuesday.

It is part of President Nixon's plan to withdraw 25,000 American troops from Vietnam by the end of this month, a project nearly half completed.

Bulletin

Surtax Bill Is Approved

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House passed and sent to President Nixon today an extension of the 10 per cent income surcharge through Dec. 31.

The roll call vote was 237 to 170.

The bill, certain to be signed promptly, extends the surtax for half the period Nixon called for as a major weapon against inflation. Estimates say the government would lose \$5.8 billion in revenue this year if the surtax died now.

Opponents fought any extension until there were assurances of substantial tax reform.