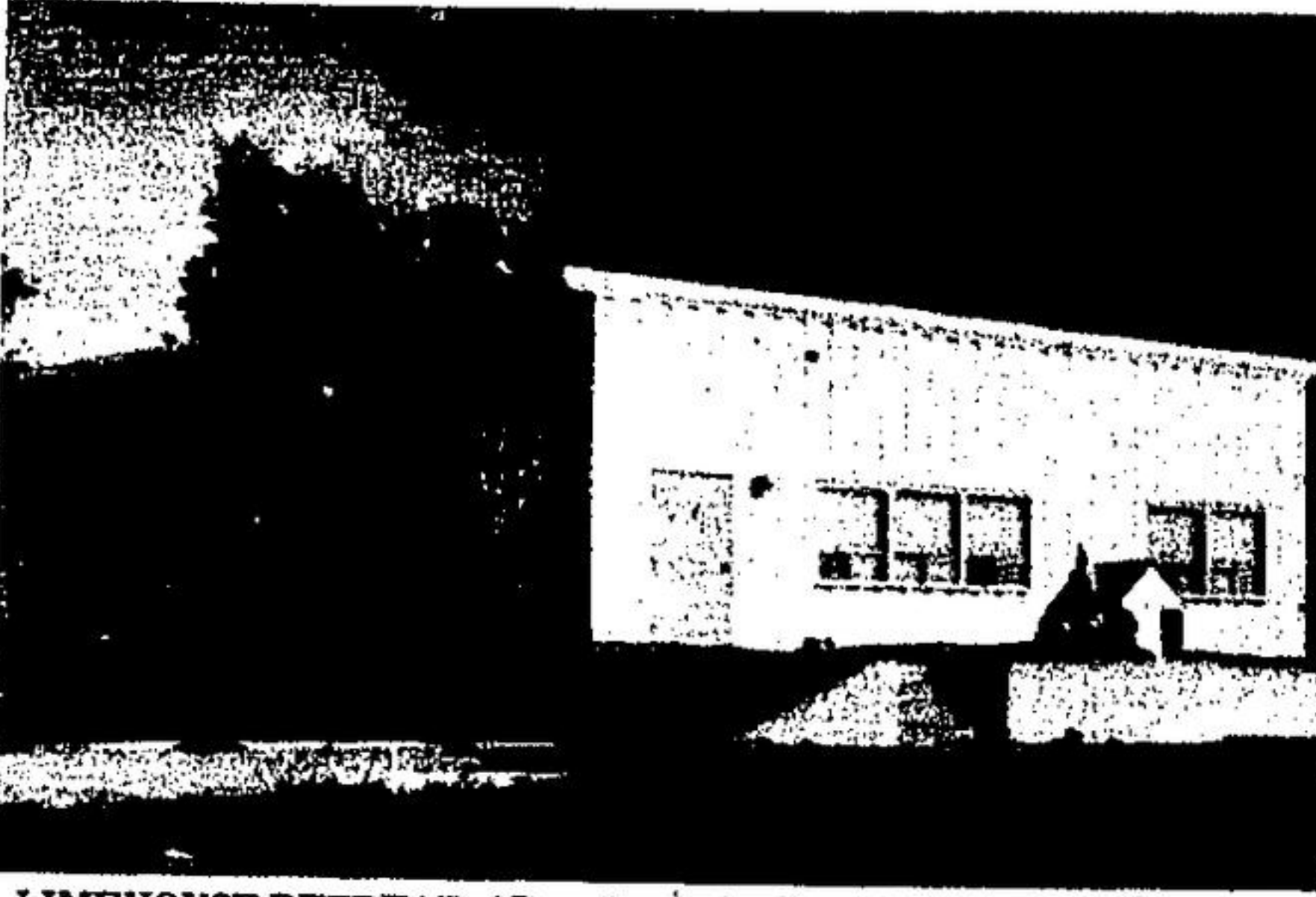


'Real nun' to testify at trial

A "real nun", who has lived at the Benedictines of Mary Immaculate "convent" on the Fifth Line of Halton Hills for some time, will testify at Denis Scallen's fraud trial later this week.

This announcement came as part of defence lawyer Jack Bellegem's opening remarks to the jury of six men and six women Monday morning as the fraud trial of the 55-year-old Limehouse man and former Georgetown resident entered its second week in Halton County Court.

The Crown, which wrapped up its case last Friday morning, alleges Scallen defrauded five people, three from Oakville and two from Brantford of over \$4,000 while posing as a Roman Catholic priest.



LIMEHOUSE RETREAT of Rev. Denis Scallen who goes by the name of Father Benedict.

Scallen has pleaded not guilty to all three counts of fraud. In court he is dressed in "priestly" garb.

After two hours of delays Monday morning while counsel met with Judge Alan B. Sprague in chambers and reviewed evidence, the defence began its case with Bellegem reviewing highlights of the accused's life, noting Scallen himself would testify.

Scallen testified throughout Monday afternoon and will return to the stand today, (Wednesday). The court did not sit yesterday (Tuesday).

Bellegem also told the court he will call a witness who is "100 per cent" a nun and lived there over the past few years when supposedly people were swindled out of money and other so-called nuns were forced to strip in front of the "priest". She was a nun before joining Scallen. He added this "real" nun will corroborate Scallen's testimony about life in the "convent" he set up in a single-storey, steel-sided industrial building at R.R. 1, Limehouse. In addition the nun still lives at the "convent". If she can't be believed, who can? Bellegem wondered.

Startling revelations

The trial has drawn national media attention and for good reason.

There have been many startling revelations during the six days of testimony in the complicated case.

The jury has heard from three young witnesses who lived as nuns at Scallen's Fifth Line retreat about how they had to disrobe in front of the defendant as penance.

There has been considerable testimony about "miraculous" photographs taken with a simple Polaroid camera.

The court has been told by one devout woman about the sun spinning and clouds turning red and green at a Wisconsin religious shrine.

Activities of a "seer" at Bayside New York, part of the Borough of Queens, and her visions, have been examined.

The jury has heard about the remarkable life Scallen led during his 55 years and a bit about plans to turn his Fifth Line retreat into a 64-acre park with a religious theme.

Evidence was also introduced regarding his activities over the past years at Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, Maple Avenue, Georgetown, and problems he had with Father Ogter Devent.

Catholic Church's position

Two expert witnesses, representing the Roman Catholic Church made it clear in testimony last week that Scallen is not a Roman Catholic priest in the church's opinion.

In testimony last Monday and Tuesday, Father Harvey Roach who was assigned by Bishop Paul Reding to assist Halton Regional Police in

their lengthy investigation of Scallen and activities at his "church", allowed the defendant might be a priest, having been ordained in December, 1974 by a Bishop of the Syro-Antiochan rite, a Catholic splinter group dating back to St. Peter, but is still not a Roman Catholic priest.

Friday Most Rev. Paul Reding, bishop of Hamilton Diocese which includes Halton Hills, testified Scallen was never ordained a Roman Catholic priest.

Bishop Reding, the last of 12 prosecution witnesses called by Assistant Crown Attorney Larry Owen, said he neither performed or ordered Scallen's 1974 ordination. He said the diocesan office has no record of the accused's ordination and such a ceremony would require the bishop's approval.

He also told the court he didn't know of any Benedictine religious order in Halton Hills.

Bishop Reding backed up Father Roach's testimony that a person can't be ordained a deacon and priest in the same day.

According to a document filled out by a Bishop Joseph Rauber of the Syro-Antiochan Rite, who performed Scallen's ordination, he was ordained a deacon, sub-deacon and priest all on December 18, 1974.

Bishop Rauber was a Roman Catholic priest but broke with the church after numerous changes were made in the way the mass is celebrated and the way other ceremonies are carried out following the Second Vatican Council's report in the early 1960's. Bishop Rauber was supposedly like Scallen and many other Catholics, deeply upset with the abandonment of the old Latin mass and revamping of other church traditions and customs.

Father Roach told the court the Syro-Antiochan Rite is one of the Orthodox churches which doesn't accept the authority of the Pope and while its bishops validly ordained priests they aren't recognized as Roman Catholic priests and can't ordain Roman Catholic priests.

Bishop Reding also told the jury he had never been approached by Scallen to perform his ordination and all ordinations take place at his church, the Cathedral of Christ the King, Hamilton.

Nun's story

One of three young women who were separated from their parents for many months while training to be nuns at Scallen's monastery told the court Wednesday she thought she was "brainwashed".

Patsy Kennedy of Oakville, an innocent looking young girl who has decided now against becoming a nun and works as a cashier, stated she believes she was "brain-

washed" or pressured into becoming a nun by Scallen in the same way other religious sects brainwash people.

She rejected a suggestion by Bellegem that in the same way she was "brainwashed" by Scallen she has now been brainwashed by her mother into saying anything to make sure the defendant's monastery is closed down.

A life-long Roman Catholic, she explained she met Scallen in December of 1975 and went to his Fifth Line retreat the next month to become a nun. "I guess it was my idea to become a nun," she said, adding she was there for 18 months.

Miss Kennedy joined Theresa and Loretta MacDonald of Brantford in telling the jury that not long before they left the building in Limehouse Scallen told them he expected to be charged with fraud but there was nothing to worry about since he would deny being a Roman Catholic priest. He instructed them to call him anything they wished.

The entire time they were at the retreat they called the accused Father Benedict.

Both MacDonald girls were at the retreat long before Miss Kennedy.

Miss Kennedy said she and the other nuns were told "don't think" and for some time after leaving she couldn't even make simple decisions when shopping. "We were told we must always believe what he said."

Miss Kennedy told the court she took her vows to stay there the rest of her life under the threat from Scallen that she "would go to hell." The two Brantford teenagers testified they had been told the same fate awaited them.

They testified they feared Scallen and even though they wanted to leave didn't because he told them if they didn't become nuns it would break their "parents' hearts".

The 20-year-old Oakville woman said that while Scallen wasn't totally responsible for her brainwashing the "vast majority" was his fault.

She said she didn't think he had hypnotized her but another witness, Anna Drozd, of Brantford a 50-year-old divorcee who was at one time Mother Superior at Scallen's monastery and his first nun, stated she had seen him hypnotize people and had told her he taught hypnotism

to doctors and dentists south of the border.

She said it was easy to be brainwashed in "those circumstances" adding Scallen set himself up to the nuns as a "supreme being". She said life with him was limited by the "four walls of that building" and they were trained to be obedient.

Loretta MacDonald, 16, who entered the convent at age 13, said she was told by Scallen if she didn't become a nun the "devil" would get her. Both she and her sister Theresa testified they were warned by the defendant if they didn't become nuns they would be raped. She told of being forced to wear "hair shirts" made out of burlap.

The girls received religious training all the time they told the court but no normal schooling and no medical or dental care. When visitors came, such as the police, they were banished to prayer in the chapel and for many months were even prevented from speaking to their parents, who were regular worshippers at Scallen's church.

One surprising fact they revealed was that Scallen told them the contents of other people's confessions.

None of them could testify he told them he was a Roman Catholic priest but simply assumed he was as did their parents. Mrs. Drozd, who met Scallen in 1972, said she knew he was an "old Catholic church or Syro-Antiochan" priest.

Thursday, Theresa Smith (nee MacDonald), who rose to become Mother Superior, said she had dreams and Scallen interpreted them as meaning she must become a nun and that St. Theresa was visiting her in sleep.

She testified she asked Scallen if he really was a

Roman Catholic priest one time and he replied "you are entertaining the devil."

Nun's strip

All three girls told of their ordeal of penance.

In a voice just above a whisper, and close to tears, Miss Kennedy told how in February, 1976, she had to disrobe in front of Scallen.

Loretta MacDonald said the women were often ordered to do penance frequently in prayer, but for being too proud and as a form of obedience and for showing humility they were ordered to strip. She said Scallen said their stripping was penance. They had to disrobe to become "better nuns" she added.

Mrs. Smith also said she was required to "disrobe" on Scallen's orders.

Bellegem tried to say it was sister Anna (Mrs. Drozd) who ordered the girls to strip but one of the women

testified sister Anna wasn't even present once when they had to disrobe. Mrs. Drozd said she didn't order the girls to strip.

Nun spurned by priest?

Georgetown defence lawyer claimed Scallen demoted Sister Anna, who was with him for four years, from Mother Superior to secretary because of the disturbing incidents and later expelled her after she expressed a non-spiritual, "worldly", interest in him. Bellegem said Mrs. Drozd told Scallen she couldn't stay with him after he "spurned" her because she was interested in him beyond being a priest.

He said this was the reason Mrs. Drozd told Mrs. Kennedy tales and helped the Kennedy girl's mother send a letter to supporters of Father Benedict, destroying his reputation.

She denied all his charges. Mrs. Drozd added Scallen had nothing to do with her divorce.

Spinning sun

Mrs. Drozd said she went to a religious shrine in Monroe Centre, Wisconsin, to report irregularities about the convent and Father Benedict to "Father Joe".

While in Monroe Centre she testified she saw the sun spin on its axis and the clouds turn red and green. She said the sun spun like a "top".

Mrs. Drozd, who converted to Catholicism after her marriage, said some people see things in Monroe Centre and others don't. She couldn't say if what she and another woman saw was "miraculous" but thought it was significant enough to write Scallen about just six days after her expulsion.

(Continued on page 13)

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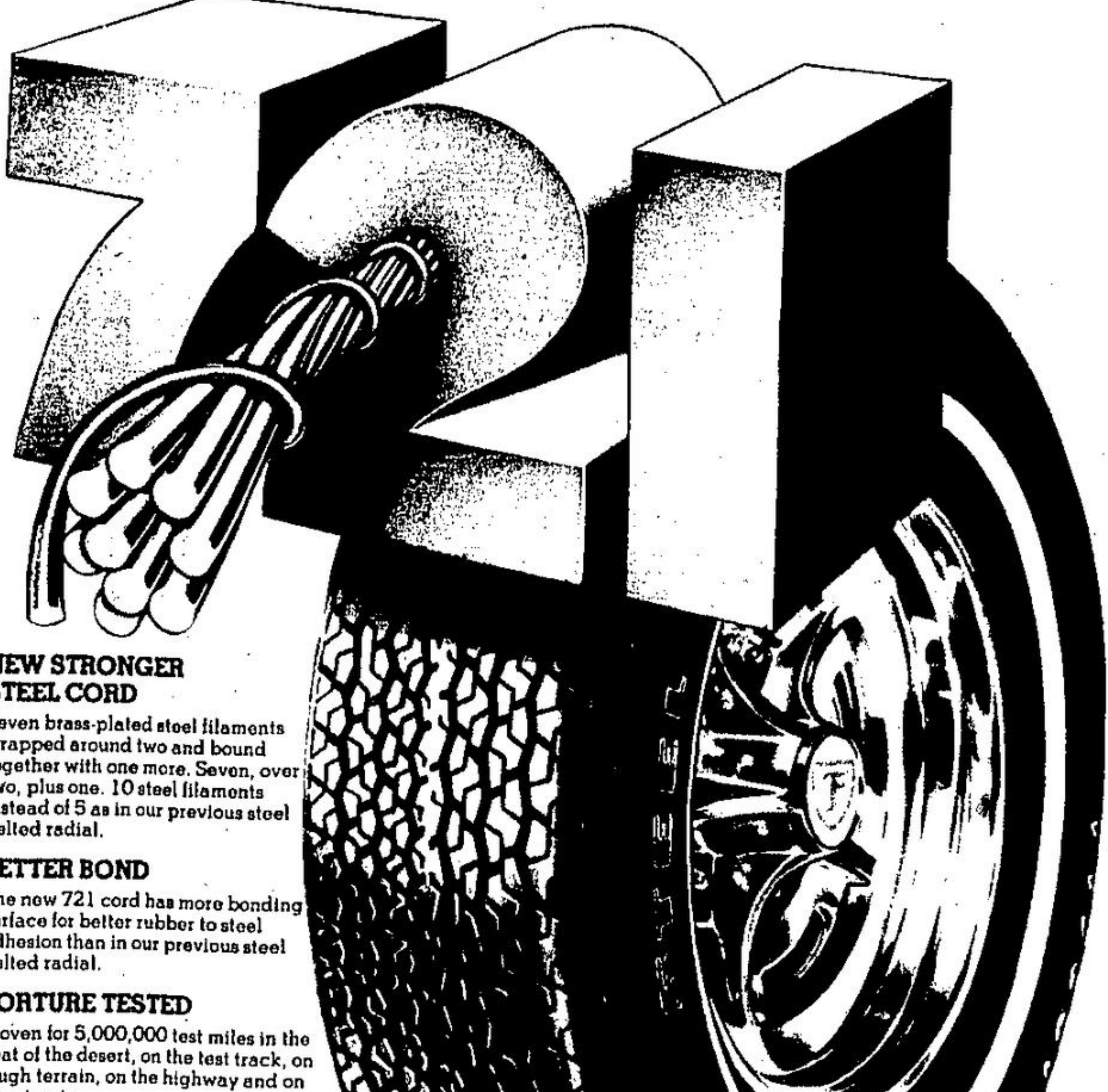
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