

# Ex-Scouter Gets Probation In Sex Case

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VIRGINIA BEACH—Linwood M. Culpepper, 41, a former Kempsville Boy Scout leader, who admitted committing sexual improprieties with youngsters placed in his charge, Wednesday was placed on 10 years' supervised probation.

Circuit Court Judge Austin E. Owen imposed the suspended sentences on Culpepper, guilty pleas to 10 misdemeanor sex offenses after the defense and the prosecutor agreed that the State Penitentiary was no place to send Culpepper.

"There's no help there (for Culpepper)," attorney A. Joseph Canada Jr. contended. "Sending him there would be the worst thing for him; he'd come out a worse man."

Commonwealth's Atty. Andre Evans conceded that prison would not accomplish much but that Culpepper should be kept under the court's careful supervision lest he repeat the offenses.

"Although the psychiatrist indicates that Culpepper represents no danger to society, that is no excuse for his actions," said Evans.

In fact, this was the second time that Culpepper has been charged with sexual offenses against Scouts under his supervision. In 1962, Culpepper, then a Scout leader in Norfolk, pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of disorderly conduct after he was charged with molesting two Scouts.

Culpepper, contending that he is "truly sorry for these acts," testified Wednesday that he had sought psychiatric treatment after the Norfolk incident but his psychiatrist committed suicide shortly after he entered treat-

ses—indecent liberties and sodomy—with 10 boys while on overnight camping trips.

Most of the boys belonged to his Troop 362 at Community United Methodist Church, 1060 Kempsville Road, though the outings were not sponsored by the troop.

Defense attorney Canada pleaded with the court to reduce the charges to misdemeanors so Culpepper would not lose his job.

Judge Owen agreed with Canada and reduced the indecent liberties charges to contributing to the delinquency of a minor. He suspended a 10-year prison sentence against Culpepper and placed him on probation for a like period. The judge also continued generally the two sodomy charges against Culpepper.

As conditions of his probation, Judge Owen said that Culpepper must continue in psychotherapy until released by his psychiatrist and "take no leadership or any supervisory position with youth groups of any kind."

In the earlier Norfolk case, a judge had also forbidden him to return to scouting.

Culpepper, described in a presentence report as a good father with two children, said he had even sold his home in his old Kempsville neighborhood after the recent charges. Some of the Scouts' parents lived nearby and "were upset" about the offenses, he testified.

"I realize the seriousness of the acts and I am truly sorry that the events took place," he told the judge.

Probation officer Julia Oates, who recommended that probation be considered in the case, testified that she supervises other sex offenders "and never had difficulties with them."

## Ex-Scout

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by and Canada would not object to Adams' hearsay evidence.

● Sentencing would be delayed until the background report is prepared.

Culpepper was arrested June 9 and accused of morals offenses against eight members of Scout Troop 362 at Community United Methodist Church as well as two other boys whom he supervised on camping expeditions in the Virginia Beach area during a six-month period from November 1973 to June 1974.

As the boys, aged 11 through 13, and their parents looked on, Adams, the investigating officer in the case, discussed the information he received during interviews with each of the boys. Adams' testimony also included the findings of an interview he had with Culpepper on the day of arrest.

"He (Culpepper) said he did fondle the boys, that he had emotional problems and that he was going to contact his psychiatrist," said Adams. "I asked him about the sodomy charges and he said, 'Yes, I probably did that.'"

It was the second such case in which Culpepper has been involved. In 1962 he was accused of child molestation against two members of a Norfolk Scout troop, police reports indicate. He



CULPEPPER report awaited

was convicted of disorderly conduct, court records show.

The mother of one of the two Norfolk Scouts has said that the charge was reduced on condition that Culpepper receive psychiatric treatment and not again participate in Boy Scout activities.

At the conclusion of Tuesday's trial, Evans thanked the parents for attending and bringing their sons. He told the parents that there would be no need for them to appear at the sentencing, but several indicated that their interest in the case had not concluded.

"I'd like to know (when sentencing will take place)," one father told Evans. "I'd like to attend."

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