

a panel which will meet today.

## DOCTOR'S DOOR HIT BY BULLETS

Seven shots hit the front door of a doctor's house in Wimpole Mews, Marylebone, London, yesterday. Another shot went through a window in a door at the rear of the house. Two girls afterwards went to Marylebone police station in a police car and then left.

Later, John Edgecombe, aged 30, a West Indian, of Boston Manor Road, Isleworth, Middlesex, was charged with shooting with intent to murder Miss Christine Margaret Keeler at Wimpole Mews. He is to appear at Marlborough Street Magistrates' Court today.

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## W. INDIAN GETS 7 YEARS

### SHOTS AT FLAT

John Arthur Edgecombe, aged 30, a West Indian, of Boston Manor Road, Brentford, Middlesex, was sentenced at the Central Criminal Court yesterday to seven years' imprisonment when the jury found him guilty of possessing a pistol with intent to endanger life.

He was found Not Guilty of shooting at Miss Christine Margaret Keeler, of Great Cumberland Place, W., with intent to murder her on December 14, or with intent to cause her grievous bodily harm. The jury were discharged from giving a verdict on a fourth count which charged Edgecombe with possessing an offensive weapon in a public place.

Passing sentence, Mr. Justice Thesiger said: "I think you were quite rightly convicted of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life. You kept that pistol, you cleaned it, and you set out on December 14 with it. You then tried to shoot your way into somebody's flat and finally shot at the wall in the direction of the window.

"I think if you had got the girl out you would have had a shot at her. There are too many cases of pistols together with quite a quantity of ammunition being in possession of unreliable people. That is what leads to cases of capital murder."

### CLEARED OF WOUNDING

On a second indictment charging Edgecombe with wounding a coloured man named Aloysius Gordon by slashing him across the face with a razor in a Soho club on October 27 he was found Not Guilty

Mr. Alastair Morton, for the prosecution, had said Miss Keeler, a white girl, had dis-

The Times, March 16, 1963

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Mr. Alastair Morton, for the prosecution, had said Miss Keeler, a white girl, has disappeared and it was therefore not possible to call her as a witness. Edgecombe and the girl had lived together between June and November, 1962, and then she had left him. On December 14, it was alleged, the defendant went to a flat in Wimpole Mews, Marylebone, W., where he knew Miss Keeler would be, and fired five shots at the locks on the door.

When Miss Keeler appeared at a window it was alleged he fired two more shots at her but she was not hit. Edgecombe told the jury he only wanted to scare Miss Keeler and never intended to harm her. He claimed that the gun was hers.

Edgecombe, in evidence, admitted in cross-examination that he was upset when Miss Keeler left him. He was in love with her.

Dealing with the second indictment accusing Edgecombe of wounding a coloured man named Gordon, Mr. Morton said at one time Miss Keeler had been friendly with Gordon but subsequently she transferred her affections to the defendant.

In the early hours of October 27 Edgecombe and Miss Keeler were in the Flamingo Club in Wardour Street, Soho, when Gordon approached them. He said to Edgecombe: "Why did you threaten me the last time we met in Ladbroke Grove?" It was alleged that Edgecombe then put his hand in his pocket and Gordon struck him. There was a fight but the men were separated. Later in the foyer of the club Gordon was slashed across the face but he did not see the instrument used. Gordon alleged that Edgecombe was responsible.

Edgecombe told the jury he was not the man who injured Gordon.

The Times, March 21, 1963

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## NO ACTION YET OVER THE MISSING WITNESS

### MATTER DEALT WITH "IN THE ORDINARY WAY"

Mr. Justice Lyell refused at the Central Criminal Court yesterday to make an order "at the present time" concerning the estreatment of the recognizances of Miss Christine Margaret Keeler, aged 21, a freelance model who

the matter to be raised at a later date, when the court will be in fuller possession of the facts.

After the proceedings Mr. Boyd said to the press that the case of Miss Keeler had been mentioned to Mr. Justice Lyell so that



...aged 24, a residence model who last week failed to appear to give evidence in the trial of a coloured man named John Arthur Edgecombe.

He was sentenced by Mr. Justice Thesiger to seven years' imprisonment after being found guilty of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life, but was acquitted of shooting at Miss Keeler with intent to murder her or cause grievous bodily harm.

Yesterday a court usher was asked to call "Miss Christine Margaret Keeler", but there was no answer.

Mr. Leslie Boyd, Clerk of the Central Criminal Court, then said to the Judge: "Miss Keeler was bound over to give evidence in the sum of £40 but she failed to appear."

Mr. Alastair Morton, for the Crown, said the only way he could assist the court was by calling Detective-sergeant Burrows, who had investigated the position regarding the missing witness.

**COULD NOT TRACE HER**

it would be made abundantly clear that the matter was being dealt with in the ordinary way. A statement had appeared in the press—in John Gordon's column in the *Sunday Express*—suggesting that this was not the case. "One member of Parliament is reported as having said that the matter was being dealt with in a way other than normal", Mr. Boyd added. "That is why I have taken this matter up. It was said that a bench warrant is always issued. That is rubbish. In all my 22 years here it has never happened."

Mr. Boyd added that no further action would be taken until Miss Keeler had been traced. When she was found she would be given the opportunity of attending court to say why she was absent at the trial of Edgecombe. It could then be that her recognizances would be estreated and it would be up to her to decide whether to pay the £40 or not. If she decided not to pay, then the sheriff of the county in which she was living would be notified and a warrant for her arrest would be issued.

There was no question of a warrant being issued at the moment. It might well be, when she turned up, that her recogniz-

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...that he tried to get in touch with Miss Keeler, on the day before the trial of Edgecombe, to warn her to attend court to give evidence but he was unable to trace her.

Mr. Morton.—Do you know whether she failed to attend of her own volition or whether pressures were brought to bear?

Detective-sergeant Burrows.—I have no knowledge of that.

Mr. Justice Lyell then asked counsel to help him with the background to the Edgecombe case. "I have seen something in the public press, but it would assist me if I had a short outline of what happened", the Judge added.

Mr. Morton said Edgecombe hired a minicab and went to the flat in the West End where he knew Miss Keeler would be. He then tried to shoot his way in. Miss Keeler and another girl appeared at the windows of the flat and it was alleged that Edgecombe then fired two shots at Miss Keeler.

The jury were not satisfied that Edgecombe fired at Miss Keeler, because he was not convicted of charges which involved that allegation—namely, shooting with intent to murder or causing grievous bodily harm. He was only found guilty of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life. Clearly Miss Keeler would have been an important witness.

**UNDOUBTED RIGHT**

The Judge.—Is there any evidence to show why he was doing it?

Mr. Morton.—In her absence it was a little amorphous, but there were three eye-witnesses of what the defendant did and so it did not matter why he fired the revolver.

Mr. Justice Lyell said: "I do not propose to deal with this matter nor to indicate any conclusion about it. It seems to me that this is a case in which any question of estreating the recognizances of the witness ought to wait until further steps have been taken to bring her before the court so that she may have the opportunity, which is her undoubted right, of telling the court what happened and, if necessary, calling any witnesses. In those

could have prevented her attending the trial and if that were the position it would be obviously unfair to make an order against her.

If any member of the public did know where Miss Keeler was, it was his or her duty to inform the police.

**QUESTION BY M.P. ABOUT MISSING WITNESSES**

FROM OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Mr. Lipton, Labour member for Brixton, last night tabled a question to the Attorney General asking how many Crown witnesses in prosecutions conducted by the Director of Public Prosecutions at the Central Criminal Court in 1962 failed to appear; and what action was taken against such witnesses. The question will be answered by Sir John Hobson, O.C., on Monday.

Mr. Lipton also commented last night to *The Times* on the statement made to reporters after yesterday's hearing by the Clerk of the Central Criminal Court. "It is so unprecedented", he said, "that a clerk to a court should hold a press conference that I must regard this as another abnormal feature."

**COMMUNIST ELECTED TO UNION POST**

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

SOUTH SHIELDS, MARCH 20

Mr. George Wylie, a shipyard joiner, who is chairman of the north-east district committee of the Communist Party, has been elected to the full-time post of secretary of the Northumberland and Tyne District of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, which covers 39 branches with a membership of almost 7,800.

In a three-cornered contest Mr. Wylie topped the poll with 415 votes. Mr. Charles Palmer, the present district secretary, was second with 250 votes and Mr. J. D. ...

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courses are to retain a connexion with the university much of the teaching must be done by dons.

The report adds: "The present inadequate scale of fees, the scattered nature of the delegacy's area, the distance of parts of it from Oxford and the fact that the demand includes subjects that do not form a prominent part of ordinary university teaching all impose limitations on the proportion of work dons can undertake."

The delegates regard as "fairly satisfac-

tory" the number of university teachers engaged in extramural work during the year under review. Out of a total of 253 classes and extension lectures 71 were taken by Oxford dons, 64 by people from other universities, and the remaining 118 by other lecturers and tutors.

### WEST INDIAN SEEKING LEAVE TO APPEAL

John Arthur Edgecombe, aged 34, a West Indian salesman, yesterday lodged an application for leave to appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal against conviction at the Central Criminal Court on March 15 of being in possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life.

Edgecombe, of Boston Manor Road, Brentford, Middlesex, also seeks leave to appeal against sentence of seven years' imprisonment passed on him by Mr. Justice Thesiger. He was acquitted of shooting at Christine Margaret Keeler, aged 21, model, with intent to murder her or cause grievous bodily harm.

## The Times, June 25, 1963

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### EDGECOMBE REFUSED LEAVE

The COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL (Mr. Justice Salmon, Mr. Justice Widgery and Mr. Justice John Stephenson) today refused John Arthur Edgecombe, 30, West Indian salesman, now detained in H.M. Prison, Wandsworth, leave to appeal to the House of Lords against the dismissal of his appeal, on May 27 last (*The Times*, May 28), against his conviction of possessing a pistol with intent to endanger life. He had been sentenced at the Old Bailey on March 15 to seven years' imprisonment. Edgecombe had been acquitted of shooting at Miss Christine Keeler, 21, with intent to murder her.

MR. JUSTICE SALMON said that Edgecombe contended that the jury's verdict was inconsistent but there was abundant evidence that he was guilty of the charge on which he was convicted. No point of law of general public importance was involved.










