

Judge acquits executives in kepone case

NEW YORK (LNS)—Two Allied Chemical executives were acquitted September 2 of conspiring to conceal from government agencies Allied's polluting of Virginia waterways with the pesticide Kepone.

Allied Chemical Co. has already pleaded no contest to nearly 1,000 counts of actual pollution violations stemming from the Kepone dumping, and the corporation's former Kepone subcontractor, the Life Science Products Company, also faces criminal charges as well as civil damage claims by about 80 former employees.

Kepone is a pesticide of white powder used to kill rats, roaches and potato bugs. It was developed by Allied in 1951 and manufactured at Life Science in Virginia until the summer of 1975 when the plant was closed by State health authorities.

Unaware of the danger, many of the Life Science workers didn't

bother to wear rubber gloves and others ate their lunches on tables covered with Kepone dust. "Nobody said this stuff was dangerous," said Dale Gilbert, an operations supervisor at the plant. "I was told it was not harmful."

Gilbert was hospitalized in June of 1975 and has not worked since. He suffers from liver and spleen damage, has become sterile, and there is a possibility that he could develop cancer—all a result of the Kepone poisoning.

Last July the state of Virginia closed the James River to commercial fishing because of the Kepone contaminated fish.

FIRST KEPONE TRIAL

The first trial of executives in the federal prosecution of corporations accused of the Kepone polluting lasted only two days. During the trial, Walter F. Lee, a regional coordinator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), testified that Allied's

original application for wastewater discharge permits -- required under federal law -- had given no indication that the company was then dumping up to 15 gallons a minute of water laden with Kepone into a tributary of the James River.

The prosecution had sought to

prove that the two Allied executives, Frank Piguet and Gerald Williams, had knowingly schemed with the prosecution's key witness, a former Allied plant manager, to withhold the pollution date from the EPA.

The manager, Virgil Hundtofte, turned state's evidence

before the trial, but when it came to the courtroom, he said he was not alleging conspiratorial conversations and that he was not even aware of a conspiracy in 1971 and 1972 when the defendants were preparing the incomplete federal water-discharge applications.

Trade group to meet

Jackson A. Rigney, dean of International Programs at N.C. State University, will address the Coastal Plain World Trade Assn. (CPWTA) at a meeting here Thursday night.

Officers of the newly-organized CPWTA are to be installed at the dinner meeting. An initial organizational meeting was held at ECU earlier in the summer.

Rigney has been dean for International Programs at N.C. State since 1968 and served for six months in 1975 as interim Acting Chancellor of the Raleigh school. He served as department head of statistics at State for 13 years before becoming involved with international programs.

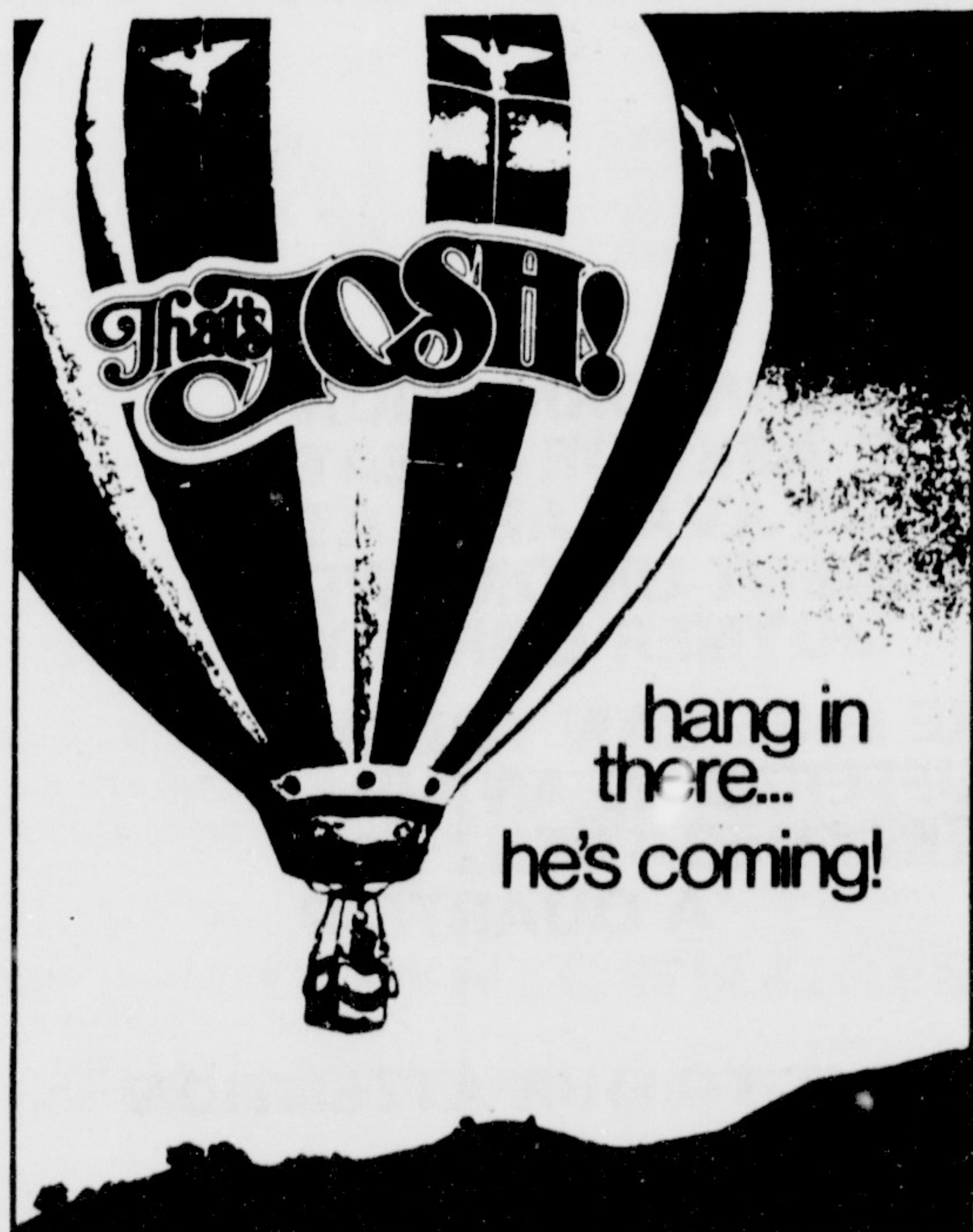
He spent two years as leader of the NCSU Agricultural Mission in Peru and later was campus director of the project for three years. He has been on short assignments in Brazil, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, India, the Philippines and Indonesia.

In 1963, he organized and

headed the U.S. agricultural delegation to a United Nations conference in Geneva on the applications of science and technology in less developed nations.

He served as Overseas Researcher for the CIC-AID Research Project in 1966-67 while living in India and covering the Near East and South Asia. Later he participated in the final report for that worldwide study.

Officers and directors nominated and scheduled for installation include John Howard of Greenville Tobacco Co., Greenville president; J. Edgar Kirk, Weyerhaeuser Corp., New Bern, vice president; Graham Flanagan, North American Fiberglass Corp., Greenville, treasurer; Ms. Mary Campbell, Barbour Boats Works, New Bern, secretary; and Louis M. Wallace, Southern Overseas Corp., Wilmington, Robert P. Michaels, A.C. Monk Co., Farmville, R.D. Whedbee, Windsor attorney and C.R. Blake, assistant to the chancellor, ECU, Greenville, as directors.



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