

\$5000 Reward Offered In Fontana Fire Case

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pg. 1



California Council on Anti-Lynching, United States Attorney General Tom Clark, and Chief of the Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover, left for Washington, D.C., last Thursday by plane. He will discuss the recent Fontana fire tragedy and the Ku Klux Klan activities in Big Bear with a view to securing federal intervention and investigation of the growing racial tension in this area. Hockaday, director of the Coast street USO in San Bernardino, will also talk with Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP while in the East.

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The local branch of the NAACP on Monday night refused to close the Fontana case, despite the findings of the attorney general's investigation that the fire that caused the deaths of all four members of the O'Day H. Short family was an accident.

The board of directors unanimously approved a resolution calling for the posting of a \$5,000 reward to anyone supplying information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons responsible for the fire, and also calling for the setting up

(Continued on Page 5)

★ more about Reward

(Continued from Page 1)

of a broad committee of labor and minority groups to press for further investigation on the Fontana case and on the newly-erupting Klan activity in Southern California.

Lorenzo Bowdoin, head of the Fontana committee that was set up by the NAACP shortly after the disaster in mid-December, branded the attorney general's investigation a "white-wash."

FINDS REPORT ABSURD

He further stated that the allegation in the Kenny report that there were no evidences of race-hatred in the Fontana area were absurd, and reiterated the statements of arson expert Paul T. Wolfe that the fire was definitely not caused merely by a kerosene lamp, as alleged, and was not accidental in origin.

He also stated that an expert on explosives, after making numerous tests, had completely concurred with the opinions expressed by Wolfe.

Bowdoin quoted him as voicing the probability that materials of some sort had apparently been placed in the Bhort home an hour or two before the family's return, and that it was these materials which had exploded and caused the fire.

EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSION

Bowdoin said that, basing himself on the experiments and investigations of the explosive and arson experts, he was definitely of the opinion that the fire was of incendiary origin and the result of a forceful explosion. The ground around the house was burned, he said, adding that the explosion was so strong that it shook the ground for an area of several miles.