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Accused Again Denny's Manager Fired After Race Bias Complaint

By Connie Cass
WASHINGTON (AP) — Denny's Inc., after firing the manager of a Maryland restaurant where six black Secret Service officers say they were denied breakfast, promises to investigate their complaint of racial bias.
The manager was fired Monday, the same day the black officers filed a lawsuit against Denny's in U.S. District Court in Baltimore. The Spartanburg, S.C.-based, restaurant chain already faces a lawsuit in California based on similar complaints from 32 black customers.
The manager of Denny's in Annapolis was fired for failing to inform his bosses about the officers' complaint, said Coleman Sullivan, vice president of communications for Denny's parent company, TW Services of Spartanburg, S.C. There are almost 1,500 Denny's across the country.
The Annapolis restaurant's staff told company investigators the problem was slow service, not discrimination, Sullivan said. But the company will seek an independent investigation, possibly by "a respected civil rights organization," he said.
"This whole thing is very painful and embarrassing to us," Sullivan said.
The six officers told a news conference they are convinced they are victims of racism. They said the same waitress who would not bring their orders quickly delivered food to white Secret Service officers sitting at other tables.
"This should not happen to anyone," said Officer Robin D. Thompson, one of the six. "It felt as if I was less than the (white) people who I had come with." The incident occurred April 1 — the same day

Denny's settled a separate Justice Department bias complaint in California by promising to enforce company policies requiring equal treatment of all customers regardless of race.
Justice Department officials said they have asked the company for an explanation of the Annapolis incident. It appears "to violate the letter and spirit of the understanding" between Denny's and the department, Acting Assistant Attorney General James P. Turner said.
The six black men were part of a group of 21 Secret Service officers who stopped for a one-hour breakfast on their way to the Naval Academy to screen people attending a speech by President Clinton.
The entire group, all wearing black uniforms, badges and guns, entered the Denny's together and were seated about 7:30 a.m. at several different tables in the same section of the restaurant, the lawsuit said. The six black men who were not served sat together at one table.
The same waitress took orders from all 21 consecutively, and all but the six black men at one table were served within 10 minutes of ordering, the lawsuit said.
The six blacks still had not been served when the entire group began to leave about 8:25 a.m., although they had complained to the waitress three times, the lawsuit said. The waitress then brought meals to some of the six, but they had no time to eat and left after complaining to the manager.
Officer Alfonso M. Dyson, one of the six, noted that his father had a similar experience with discrimination at a restaurant 30 years ago.
"Times have changed, but apparently some things haven't changed with the times," he said.



C.B. NIXON, FIRST PRINCIPAL OF LITTLE RIVER SCHOOL, GREETED SUNDAY BY AREA CITIZENS

See Story on Page 2.

Federal Prosecutor Decides St. Augustine's Did Not Retaliate; Will Appeal Suit

RALEIGH (AP) — A federal prosecutor has decided that St. Augustine's College did not retaliate against two students who supported a white professor's successful race discrimination case against the historically black school.
Acting U.S. Attorney James Ross Dedrick sent letters to the school and the students saying the evidence did not back up the allegations. The allegations were that students' grades were lowered to prevent them from graduating or that senior Leslie Ross' phone was tapped by administrators.
"We've concluded that the allegations that were made were not substantiated and we're not going to comment further about that," Dedrick said. "There won't be any further investigation into the matter." An attorney for St. Augustine's said the school expected the decision.
"We are not surprised with the result of this investigation, but we are delighted with the speed at which the U.S. attorney reached this conclusion," said Charles Francis, the school's new attorney. "We are confident we will be vindicated in our other legal matters as well." The school still faces a federal lawsuit from a white professor, Tony Solari. A political science professor, Solari says he was fired because of his race and because he supported another white, Allan Cooper, in his successful discrimination suit against the historically black school.
School officials also said last Wednesday that they plan to appeal the \$362,558 verdict that Cooper won in federal court.
The U.S. attorney's investigation was prompted by Ross, who complained that her grade point average fell from 3.9 to 2.2 shortly after she testified on behalf of Cooper, a political science professor and her former faculty advisor.
Cooper sued the college for racial discrimination after he was denied tenure and later demoted.
According to a letter from Dedrick, the investigation was called by U.S. District Judge James Fox, the presiding judge in the Cooper case. The probe began May 6, when FBI agents interviewed Ross, fellow student Carlos Bates and two others.
Chuck Richards, an FBI agent in Charlotte, said everything the FBI gathered was turned over to the U.S. Attorney's Office.
"To my knowledge, as of Friday of last week (May 14) there was no federal violation," he said. "To my knowledge there was nothing of prosecutive merit. That's not to say there couldn't be in the future if new information comes up." Ross, 21, who hoped to go on to law school after St. Augustine's, cried when she heard the news.
"Oh, my God," she said in a phone interview from her Henrietta, N.Y., home. "There's no way I'm going to accept this. I will fight them with my last breath." Ross, who expected to graduate at the top of her class, said the school acted against its own policies when it changed some of her grades from incompletes to failing grades.
School officials said that Ross and Bates failed to take final exams for unfinished course work within deadlines, so the grades were automatically changed to failures.

First Female and African American Ola Lewis Sworn In To Sit In 13th Judicial District Seat

FAYETTEVILLE (AP) — Ola Lewis always achieved early.
She graduated from high school in Elizabethtown, The Charlotte Observer reported.
She will be the 13th District's only female judge, and only black judge.
"Ola is dedicated to her profession. She's dependable. She's a champion of justice," said Jerry Dove, a Brunswick County state trooper who worked often with Lewis in her former job as an assistant district attorney. "She is an honest and fair person." Lewis envisions herself with an opportunity for greater impact on drunken drivers and abusers of women and children.
"By my verdicts, by my actions or even through a speech I may make at a high school, if I can make a difference in one person's life, then I can say, 'Job well done.'"
"Ola Mose-El Lewis grew up the fifth and youngest child of Doris and Mose Lewis in Spring Lake, a Fayetteville suburb. Her father was a career soldier in the 82nd Airborne at Fort Bragg and now is an assistant Brunswick County Schools superintendent; her mother is the principal at South Harnett Elementary.
An effervescent woman, slender, with glasses trimmed in lavender, Lewis formed her strong opinions and confidence through prayer and family, expecting as much of herself as they did of her.
She graduated from high school young, and after one miserable, homesick semester at UNC-Chapel Hill, she transferred home, to study accounting at Fayetteville State University.
"It was the greatest thing I ever did," she said. "One thing black colleges offer black students is that they tell you how it is, how to get along in this society, how to progress in this society." While working at NationsBank in Fayetteville after college, she decided to get a master's degree. Her father and her uncle, Jason Parker, a Hickory assistant district attorney, suggested law school.
"I didn't realize the power law has," Lewis said. "Law changes history. Someone said separate but equal is not equal, and that's why I can be where I am today." During law school, Lewis worked as a

clerk in House Speaker Dan Blue's Raleigh law firm. When she told him she wanted to be an assistant district attorney, he sent her off with blessings, and recommendations.
In Eastern North Carolina's 13th District — Bladen, Brunswick and Columbus counties — Lewis for two years prosecuted drunken drivers, thieves, men who battered women, mothers who abused their children.
She was the only black practicing lawyer in the district and, for a while, the sole woman in the district attorney's office.
"It was a lot of experience in a very short period of time," she said.
She learned impromptu case evaluation, how to interview witnesses and came to adore talking to juries, keeping them involved through body antics and the rise and fall of her clear voice.
It was experience she'd need.
With three years left on his term, District Judge Jack Brooks was leaving to replace a retiring superior court judge. The district Bar Association gathered to nominate three candidates for Hunt to consider.
Of 82 votes cast in the Brunswick County Courthouse on April 16, Lewis won 77.
On May 6, Lewis interviewed with the governor's general counsel, and, four days later, with the governor himself.
Their meeting lasted 20 minutes. Hunt asked for her views on crime control, women and children issues. Then he asked her to become a judge.
Lewis wanted to shout. Instead, she told the governor: "I've got a grandmother who's 102. She's seen a lot of things in her life, but this is the first time she's seen a judge in her family." "Well, call your grandmother first, then," Hunt said.
To take the bench immediately, she was sworn in the next day with little fanfare, in blue jeans. When she ordered her robe — a \$2-inch crepe drape for \$152.40 at S&J Gospel Shop in downtown Fayetteville — she couldn't resist confiding to the salesclerk, "I am a judge!" Although her official swearing-in was scheduled Monday morning, Lewis took the bench last Monday [May 17].

Lawyer Urges Halt To Disclosure of Marshall's Papers

By Harry F. Rosenthal
WASHINGTON (AP) — A lawyer for the widow of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall wants the Library of Congress to halt public access to the late jurist's papers, it was reported Tuesday.
William T. Coleman Jr. was quoted in The Washington Post as saying he was certain that Marshall, who died last Jan. 24, would not want his papers made public so soon after his death and that the decision to do so was "irresponsible." Library officials rejected that stand, saying in a statement that Marshall "clearly communicated to library staff members on Oct. 7, 1991 his intention that the papers be open upon his death and confirmed this intention in the instrument of gift signed Oct. 24, 1991." Library spokeswoman Jill Brett told The Post there was no intention to close to public view the 173,000 documents Marshall amassed during his 24 years on the Supreme Court. She said the staff was compiling all of its documentation on the gift for review by Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, who had met with Marshall in 1991.
The Post first reported on materials in Marshall's file in Sunday editions.
Coleman contended that opening Marshall's files, which included documents on internal court deliberations as recently as 1991, "is hurting the justice, hurting the judicial system and hurting the Supreme Court."

judicial oath Monday, May 24, at the Bladen County Courthouse in Elizabethtown, The Charlotte Observer reported.
She will be the 13th District's only female judge, and only black judge.
"Ola is dedicated to her profession. She's dependable. She's a champion of justice," said Jerry Dove, a Brunswick County state trooper who worked often with Lewis in her former job as an assistant district attorney. "She is an honest and fair person." Lewis envisions herself with an opportunity for greater impact on drunken drivers and abusers of women and children.
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When Invitations Came, Marshall Was a Great Dissenter

By Mike Feinsilber
WASHINGTON (AP) — When you are a public figure, everybody wants a piece of you. Nothing shows that as well as the papers Thurgood Marshall gave the Library of Congress when he retired from the Supreme Court in 1991.
Marshall's secretaries apparently filed everything that passed under his hand or before his eyes during his 24 years on the court.
They kept the great dissents and strong opinions. And they kept an accumulation of handwritten or typed slips of paper used to pass along requests for a moment of the justice's time.
They are in the collection of 173,000 items in the library's new Marshall collection.
When it came to accepting invitations, Marshall was a great dissenter. He didn't always, but he almost always, said no.
Sometimes, he scrawled back: "No can do." One folder contained telephoned requests from 1975 through 1977.
Would Justice Marshall attend a luncheon given by Vice President and Mrs. Walter Mondale in honor of the Shah of Iran and his wife? No.
Would he preside over a moot court at the University of San Diego? No.
Five high school juniors from Texas were visiting. The chief justice had arranged for them to attend a court session. Could they stop by and shake hands with Marshall? No.
"A friend of Goody's" (Marshall's son) would like to come by and say hello on Thursday.

No.
Joseph Albritton, then publisher of the now defunct Washington Star, sent word he "wants to meet you and he thinks you will enjoy knowing him." Marshall's scrawled reply: "Sorry, no can do." Would Marshall walk across the street to the Capitol for a reception by the Botswana Embassy for Botswana's deputy speaker? No.
Would he give a radio interview on the anniversary of the Brown vs. Board of Education decision, the case he argued as an NAACP lawyer, the case that ruled school segregation unconstitutional? No.
Would he deliver the eulogy at the memorial service for the late liberal chief justice, Earl Warren? No.
Would he preside over the induction of a new judge and make a few remarks? Marshall's handwritten reply: "No can do. No speeches, etc." Even name dropping didn't help. A professor from the University of France doing research on the civil rights movement wanted to come by and "is making this request at the encouragement of professor William Taylor of Catholic University," Marshall said no.
The outcome of some requests was not indicated, and occasionally Marshall did accept an invitation. Three times, when the law clerks of Justices William Brennan, Lewis Powell and Harry Blackmun invited him to lunch, Marshall accepted.
Marshall's left-behind telephone messages demonstrate the "ome of the demands that are put on public figures.