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48 Pages This Week

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Feus ...

political activities of local consultant

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

Three of Winston-Salem's Afro-American politicians and a Greensboro councilman have joined the ranks of others in major cities across the country who have been or are being investigated by federal agents because of possible criminal activities.

Aldermen Vivian S. Burke, Pat Hairston and Larry W. Womble and Councilman Earl Jones are being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service for possible misdealings with consultant Rodney J. Sumler.

"The areas under investigation for potential offenses are money laundering, tax evasion, mail fraud, violation of the Hobbs Act, which prohibits extortion or conspiracy to commit extortion," said U.S. Attorney Robert H. Edmunds. "The maximum penalty for money laundering

is 20 years in jail and a \$500,000 fine; for violation of the Hobbs Act, 20 years and a \$250,000 fine; mail fraud is a five-year offense and I think tax evasion probably carries a five- to ten-year prison term."

Conviction of any one of the preceding felonious crimes would also mean loss of the rights to vote and run for public office until restored by judicial authorities, Mr. Edmunds said.

Neither the U.S. Attorney nor FBI officials would comment on particulars of the investigation. However, Mr. Sumler's home at 2515 North Patterson Avenue and business, Associate Consultants Inc. also on North Patterson, were searched and some of its contents are in the hands of federal agents. In addition, the aldermen and other city officials have been questioned and subpoenas have reportedly been issued for certain city records. All this information is

being filed for reviewing purposes by a federal grand jury later this month. The grand jury will determine whether to issue indictments.

The search warrant affidavits were sealed per investigators' request and a subsequent order by United States Magistrate Russell A. Eliason. According to the order, investigators requested that the affidavits be sealed because information they contained could "hamper a grand jury investigation by (a) making patent the sources of the government's information, (b) unfairly tarnishing the reputation of elected officials subject to reelection and as to whom there is probably no cause to believe at this time that they have been active in illegal matters, and (c) offering the targets of investigation the opportunity to exact retribution in some fashion against those who have provided information in this investigation."

Mr. Eliason agreed to seal the documents, however, parties wishing them to be made public can make a motion to unseal them by August 14 and a hearing will be scheduled.

Investigators also requested that the names of those under investigation be masked on the search warrant.

"The government indicates a concern that these persons named ... Hairston, Womble, Newell (sic) and Jones could all be subject to unfair inferences of guilt and adverse publicity," the order reads.

Mr. Edmunds said the magistrate inadvertently substituted Alderman Virginia Newell's name for Mrs. Burke's in the order.

"I have a hunch the magistrate mixed up the names," Mr. Edmunds said. "The magistrate, when he drafted it probably substituted one alderman's

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Long denies link to Sumler

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

On page one of Gerald H. Long's "Report of Expenditures" tallied during his 1988 bid for a seat on the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners there is a record of a payment of \$5,726 made to Associate Consultants for "promotion costs."

Rodney J. Sumler, owner of the political consulting firm, is currently being investigated by federal agents who are looking into allegations of corruption, conspiracy, money laundering, tax evasion and mail fraud.

Commissioner Long, however, denies having any dealings whatsoever with Mr. Sumler during his campaign.

"The person I worked with is an employee of the city," Mr. Long said. "His name is (William R.) Bill Tatum. I paid about \$5,000, a little over that, for him to distribute lawn signs, telephone posts signs, window posters and hand cards telling people to vote, in the black community.

"This wasn't done in the general election but in the primary last April. My finance manager, Dalton Ruffin, said Tatum couldn't take a check payable to himself because he would have trouble with his job. He was moonlighting on evenings and weekends. So he asked Dalton to make the check payable to Associate Consultants."

When asked if he ever did any work for Mr. Long, Mr. Tatum said, "I don't know what you're talking about. No comment."

Mr. Tatum also is the first vice president of the local NAACP.

A city spokesman said it is not against regulations for employees to moonlight if they get permission and if it does not interfere with their present duties.

Mr. Sumler said Associate Consultants hires freelancers from time-to-time and that "the person that Jerry Long hired did some of that freelancing."

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Oldhams bid farewell

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

Every September Gladys Dandridge Oldham turns 17 again as she orients another class of business students at Winston-Salem State University. Next month she and her husband, Warren, will bid adieu to the school they call their alma mater after logging in a combined 57 years of service.

Mrs. Oldham, retiring from her duties as an associate professor in the university's Division of Business and Economics, has already done her paperwork but as she said, "I haven't cleaned out my desk yet because I still have students out on field assignments with incomplete grades."

Mr. Oldham will officially resign as WSSU's registrar Sept. 1. He has worked at the university for 20 years and has been in education for 38 years.

"I was trained to be an educator and I love it, that's why I've been in it for all these years," said Mr. Oldham, 63. "I've loved working with students and watching them come in as freshman and seeing them growing and maturing. I've also wanted to do all that I could possibly do to help black people and I was taught that education is the way to do that."

He began his education at Virginia Union University, but the all-con-

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photo by Mike Cunningham

Enjoying a restful afternoon and anticipating many more in light of their retirement, Warren and Gladys Oldham are cilmxing a combined 57 years at WSSU.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The Hunt Case: Is justice on trial?

By ROOSEVELT WILSON
Chronicle Staff Writer

This is the fourth of a series of articles examining the investigation, conviction and possible retrial of Darryl E. Hunt for the 1984 murder of Deborah B. Sykes.

As Darryl Eugene Hunt waits to learn if he will have to stand trial again for the murder of former newspaper copy editor Deborah B. Sykes, the story of Johnny Gray, the star witness in Mr. Hunt's 1985 conviction, continues to unfold like an episode of "Ripley's Believe It or Not."

The handling of the investiga-

tion by the Winston-Salem Police Department was highly criticized by the Afro-American community and was the subject of an investigation by the office of the city manager. That review, too, was critical of the way the investigation was handled.

The poor handling of some aspects of the case also led the North Carolina Supreme Court to overturn Mr. Hunt's conviction.

Mr. Gray's fingering Mr. Hunt as the murderer has been the focus of much of the attention and the subject of much of the criticism. Court documents and other evidence show that at times Mr. Gray made the Winston-Salem Police

Department look like amateurs, and the police exacerbated the situation either by withholding questionable information or trying to explain some of Mr. Gray's actions for the record.

Ms. Sykes, who was raped and suffered multiple stab wounds, was white, prompting the Afro-American community to view the use of the questionable evidence to convict Mr. Hunt, an Afro-American, as a racial retaliation.

The Rev. Carlton A.G. Eversley, pastor of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church and spokesman for the Darryl Hunt Defense Fund Committee, characterizes it as a "white-dominated criminal justice system

snatching any ol' boy to satisfy a societal need for vengeance for a brutal crime."

To say Mr. Gray was of questionable character would be generous in the eyes of many. Police records and court documents show many contradictions and evidence of dishonesty on Mr. Gray's part, yet his testimony was the glue that held together a shaky case for District Attorney Donald K. Tisdale.

After positively identifying Terry Thomas as the murderer only to learn that Mr. Thomas was in jail on the day Ms. Sykes was murdered, Mr. Gray then selected Mr.

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Congressman Leland missing in Ethiopia

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Well-wishers around the country lit up the telephones in Rep. Mickey Leland's office Wednesday as his staff spent a third day waiting for word about the missing congressman.

Leland, a Houston Democrat and chairman of the House Select Committee on Hunger, disappeared Monday after his twin-engine plane took off from Addis Ababa on its way to a refugee camp on Ethiopia's border with Sudan, about 480 miles away.

"We're still waiting, anxiously," legislative assistant James Williams told a caller. "We're waiting for him to call us up and ask us for his messages."

Inside Leland's personal office at the Rayburn House Office Building, spokeswoman Alma Newsom sat at his desk conducting a string of interviews that she said keeps her mind off the grim possibilities.

"Everything is in their favor at this point. The weather is temperate, it's not too hot or cold, and these planes do carry adequate provisions. They're not in any immediate danger on the ground," said Ms. Newsom, a friend of Leland's since their college days.

"We feel he's just landed, stranded and waiting to get in touch with us,"

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Congressman Mickey Leland: Friends are awaiting word.



NEWS DIGEST

Compiled From AP Wire

Greenville police to conduct racial bias probe

GREENVILLE -- The Greenville Police Department will conduct an internal investigation of allegations of racial discrimination, Mayor Ed Carter said Tuesday.

Carter earlier called for an independent investigation, but decided after a closed-door council meeting to ask Police Chief Jerry Tesmond and City-Manager Greg Knowles to conduct the internal investigation.

The complaints alleged favoritism toward whites, especially white females; under-representation of blacks in the detective division, and the assignment of blacks to patrols in black neighborhoods.

Class of 1964 reunion focuses on civil rights

GREENSBORO -- Talk during the reunion of the Dudley High School class of 1964 touched on topics ranging from biology classes to football games, but the focus was the same as it was 25 years ago: the civil rights movement.

"During the time of the marches, we were very active, and a few of our members were arrested," said Robert Rambert of Greensboro. "We were not scared to participate in civil rights."

It was the last segregated class before integration brought white students to the school a year later in 1965.

Defiance regains anti-apartheid group's offensive

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa -- Sidestepping an array of state-of-emergency bans, the militant core of the anti-apartheid movement is back on the offensive with a defiance campaign that has government leaders groping for a response.

Crushing the campaign by force could wreck the government's ongoing initiatives to improve its international standing. Allowing unchecked civil disobedience could fuel widespread black activism and a white backlash against the governing National Party in advance of parliamentary elections next month.

Hickey, NAACP argue over black achievement

ELLICOTT CITY, Md. -- School Superintendent Michael E. Hickey and local NAACP leaders are facing a war of words over black student achievement, just three weeks after both sides pledged greater cooperation. In a strongly worded challenge, the NAACP lashed out at Hickey in a letter accusing him of using "smear tactics" and making a "highly inflammatory and unprofessional" written response.