

SCLC attorney: Pitt has history of brutality

by Karen Pusey
Staff Writer

Pitt County has a history of police brutality and State Trooper Billy Day is only a victim of that system, a Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) attorney said Wednesday night.

Jerry Paul, member of a panel discussing recent incidents in Ayden, said the investigation of the Aug. 6 shooting death of black farm laborer Bill Murphy by Day was handled poorly from the beginning.

A panel sponsored by the Carolina Union Current Affairs Committee discussed Wednesday recent protest in Ayden stemming from Murphy's death and other incidents of alleged police brutality.

The chief issues raised in the discussion included summaries of the Ayden protests, the involvement of SCLC in Pitt County and experiences of UNC students jailed after an Ayden protest a week ago.

Day was acquitted of criminal charges by a coroner's inquest and investigation by the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI). Many Ayden blacks have said the investigations were not handled correctly. As a continuation of the Ayden protests, Dr. Ralph Abernathy, president of the SCLC, will speak at 8 p.m. today on the Ayden situation at the York Memorial Church in Greenville.

In addition to Paul, members of Wednesday night's panel were Chris Coates, third-year law student and organizer of the UNC students who went to Ayden; Dan Pollit, a law professor and president of the N.C. Civil Liberties Union (NCCLU);

Paul Keck, a second-year law student and former student body president of Fayetteville State University; Laurie Hines, a senior psychology major at UNC and one of the students arrested; and Billy Roundtree, vice president of the Pitt County chapter of the NCCLU.

Pollit expressed concern of the NCCLU about the authorities' failure to

"clean up" the facts surrounding Murphy's death.

Day's version of the incident is that Murphy had been arrested for public drunkenness, put in the patrol car, gone for Day's gun, and had been shot in the following struggle for the weapon, according to Pollit. Murphy then reportedly fell out of the open patrol car door on to the highway where Day handcuffed him and took him to the hospital.

Pollit said the NCCLU chapter in Pitt County conducted its own investigation, got a report from Murphy's employer that Murphy was not drunk, and found two witnesses to the arrest.

Although these findings were reported to the SBI, none of the NCCLU findings were brought out at the coroner's inquest, Pollit said.

Pollit added that the governor's report of an investigation which exonerated Day of the slaying has not been made available to the NCCLU.

Paul, chief speaker on the panel, and

attorney for the Pitt County United Effort Coalition, described the philosophy of the SCLC in Pitt County. "The intention of the movement is to get arrested," he said.

"The only tool we have is our bodies," Paul said. "The only way to beat the system is to suffer. Going to jail is the only weapon the movement has."

"You are here tonight because we took to the streets," he told the crowded meeting room in the Student Union.

He cited incidents which were poorly handled in the investigation of Murphy's death: Murphy's clothes were never found after the shooting; his family had to pay for an autopsy which was performed 10 days after the shooting, and the SCLC had to fight for an inquest which was held three weeks later.

He then listed some SCLC demands, including bail reform, elimination of bond requirements in some cases, a limit of \$500 bond in misdemeanors, and the firing of Day.

Excessive bonds in Pitt County have

been a problem from the beginning, Paul said.

Bond for each arrested UNC student was set at \$1,000. They were charged with parading without a permit which carries a maximum fine of \$50.

Currently, Golden Frinks, field secretary for SCLC working in Ayden, is under \$50,000 bond.

Coates, one of the students arrested in Ayden, said the Pitt County Jail was the best example of how the Ayden power structure was reacting to the protests.

"I got the feeling we were just seeing the relatively minor atrocities of the power structure," Coates said.

Keck, who was also arrested, said he would go to jail again. "Anytime you don't fight for you don't win."

Miss Hines related discrimination in the jail. She said the men and searched, but the white and the white women who keep their books and cigs, black women were not.

One student asked what would happen to the people who have already been arrested. Paul replied that pleas of not guilty would be entered at the public hearing Dec. 9.

If the students are found guilty, an appeal will be made to Superior Court. He stressed no fines would be paid.

Another question concerned the date of the next march in Ayden. Paul said the next march would involve a massive "jail-in," but people must be prepared to be in jail for at least a week. That, plus problems with raising bond money have created difficulties in establishing a specific date.

Paul said UNC students are invited to a rally tonight in Ayden to meet Abernathy. Persons interested in going should meet at the Friends' Meeting House on Highway 54 at 1:30 p.m., and bring sleeping bags. Another group will be for Ayden at 8 a.m. Saturday. For her information, contact Lou Paul, at 3418.

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Memorial set today in honor of Cates

by Charles Jeffries
Staff Writer

A memorial service, including a downtown march, will be held at noon today for James Cates, a Chapel Hill youth who was stabbed to death at a dance one year ago at UNC.

The service, coordinated by the Black Student Movement (BSM), will attempt to focus on the death of Cates and at the same time show public sentiment over the recent developments in Ayden.

Cates bled to death behind the Student Union after being involved in a fracas between a group of black Chapel Hill youths and a Durham motorcycle gang on Nov. 21, 1970. Members of the gang were later acquitted of murder

charges in a Hillsborough court.

Speakers for today's services which will begin at the statue of Silent Sam near Franklin Street will include the Rev. Leon White, a member of the N.C.-Va. Committee for Racial Justice; Sandra Clark, member of the Afro-American Society of Chapel Hill High School; Harvey White, president of the Student Government Association at NCCU in Durham; Cureton Johnson, sports information director at A&T State University and a 1970 graduate of UNC; Bernard Lee, assistant to the Rev. Ralph Abernathy; and Jimmy McRae, chairman of the BSM.

After hearing Rev. White speak at the Silent Sam statue, there will be a march

across campus to the Pit, scene of the stabbing.

According to a spokesman for the BSM, members of the group are asked to wear black or other dark colors, while other students are asked to show their support by wearing black armbands which will be available at the start of the services at the statue.

Full cooperation has been received from the Chapel Hill Police Department and the campus police in directing traffic for the march.

"We hope to attract enough attention so as to bring to the public scrutiny the current trend of events in this state which affect black people, and gain support to halt that trend," said the spokesman.



The Eagle rolls into town on the top of a UNC student's van. The paint job adds a lot to the canoe, but one thing: when the canoe's in water, The Eagle's upside down. (Staff photo by Cliff Kolovson)

250 hear bands, register to vote

by Jessica Hanchar
Staff Writer

Several hundred persons attended a voter registration rally Thursday afternoon at the Chapel Hill Municipal Building where about 250 - double the previous single day's high - registered to vote.

The rally which included three

rock bands, lasted from 4 to 8 p.m. on the Municipal Building parking lot.

About 30 people were always in line waiting to register to vote. All those standing in line by 9 p.m. were allowed to register. The total of 250 was more than double the previous single day high of 120.

The bands, spectators and

registrants were all part of a voter registration rally sponsored by the Campaign for Young Voters, the UNC Student Government, N.C. Veterans for Peace and the Carolina Union Current Affairs Committee.

The rally was held not only to register the young voters but also to place them on the list of prospective jurors. The jury list will be compiled from all those who had

registered to vote by 9 p.m. Thursday.

Three registrars asked the students the routine questions: Do you declare Chapel Hill to be your legal residence? Have you severed all legal ties with your former home? Each student was asked his age, address, and party affiliation, and then each took the oath required of all who register.

Comments from students who came to register varied from "I want to be able to serve on the jury" to "I live here, why shouldn't I register" to "I just want to be able to vote."

Outside the building, in between band numbers, members of Campaign for Young Voters and the N.C. Veterans for Peace urged anyone over 18 in the crowd to go inside and register. The Veterans circulated petitions for amnesty to those who opposed the Vietnam war.

Requests for contributions for those arrested in Pitt County last weekend during the protests against alleged police brutality were also heard during the voter rally.

Orange County Democratic Chairman Roger Foushee, Rep. Carl Smith (D-Orange and Chatham Counties) and other area politicians attended the rally and spoke informally to the students.

Weather

TODAY: Partly cloudy and warm; high in the mid 70s, low in the high 50s; probability of precipitation 30 percent.



Voter registration



UNC student Kathryn Rankin (left) gives the oath as Mrs. Ken Howard registers to vote. About 250 persons registered to vote at the voter registration rally Thursday at the Chapel Hill Municipal Building.

Several hundred persons attended the rally, where they were entertained by local bands (right). (Staff photos by Scott Stewart)