

# NATIONAL BRIEFS



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## Lyons seeks reduced state prison sentence

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Attorneys for the Rev. Henry Lyons, former president of the National Baptist Convention USA, have asked for a reduced state prison sentence.

In a petition filed Thursday, Lyons' attorneys said the minister is "truly repentant" and would not repeat the racketeering and grand theft crimes for which he received a 5 1/2-year sentence.

"If there was a lesson to be learned, he has learned it," the petition said.

Lyons, 57, was convicted in state court Feb. 27 of swindling \$4 million from businesses eager to reach members of one of the nation's largest black church groups.

Lyons also was convicted of stealing nearly \$250,000 donated by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to rebuild burned black churches in the South.

He then was sentenced in June by a federal judge to 4 1/4 years after pleading guilty to tax evasion and fraud. Since the federal and state sentences run concurrently, the federal penalty didn't add any time to Lyons' stay behind bars.

Circuit Judge Susan Schaeffer is scheduled to hear the request Aug. 18 to reduce his state sentence to match the federal term.

State prosecutor Bill Loughery, who led the case against Lyons, declined comment on the petition.

Federal prosecutors have said they will seek to have his federal sentence increased.

Lyons is serving his sentence with murderers and rapists and has learned the value of his freedom, said defense attorney lawyer Denis de Vlaming.

He was taken from protective custody and required to undergo "boot camp training" with inmates who have records for violent crime, the lawyer added.

## National Day Of Protest to be held

Plans are under way for the fourth National Day of Protest to Stop Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation, sponsored by the national office of the October 22nd Coalition. The event is set for Oct. 22 in New York City. A diverse group of more than 75 representatives from Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Cleveland, Greenville and Houston recently met in Detroit to plan the agenda, which will include concerts, rallies and workshops.

In addition, the coalition is involved in the Stolen Lives Project, which has so far documented more than 2,000 cases of people who have been shot, beaten or pepper-sprayed by members of law enforcement since 1990. The research is ongoing and results will be published in a book due out this summer. Call (212) 477-8062.

## Black promoters support NAACP

The Rev. Joseph Lowery, spokesperson for the Black Promoters Association and founder emeritus of the Southern Christian Leadership Con-

See Briefs on A11

## Residents, city react to grisly murder

By STEPHEN F. HOLDER  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EMORY, Texas — The slaying of a black man believed to have been tied to a tree and burned has shaken both those who knew him and those he'd never met in this Rains County town of 1,000.

H.W. Walker's death is especially disturbing because a white teenager is being held as a suspect, and some think the killing was racially motivated.

"I can't see how someone that age could do something like that to an older person. I was always brought up to respect my elders," said Lexia Alexander, cashier at an Emory drugstore.

"Even if this is not a hate crime, killing someone and just leaving them there to rot like that is terrible."

It's not yet clear whether the crime can be labeled a hate crime. But the county about 50 miles east of Dallas has become the focus of an extensive federal investigation.

NAACP officials approached U.S. Attorney Mike Bradford with the results of their own investigation and the prosecutor agreed there was sufficient information to pursue the matter.

The Dallas County medical examiner's office said today that an autopsy on Walker was not yet complete.

Emory residents would like nothing more than for the attention to end.

"I'm real sorry this took place in our county," said Allen Stuart, the local justice of the peace. "We've never had this kind of bad publicity before."

But publicity is just what some are seeking. The victim's sister, Daisy Walker Robinson, says she and her family have had little cooperation from local law enforcement in their attempts to get information on what happened.

"We're here today because we need answers and we want justice," she said at a news conference Thursday. "No human being is supposed to be burned and chained the way he was."

Walker was reported missing in early May and his charred

See Murder on A11

## Reliving slavery



Photo by Steve Helber/The Associated Press  
Slave Gowan Pamphlett, played by James Ingram, is restrained by Thomas Skinner, played by Ken Treese, as tourists watch during a program called "Enslaving Virginia" in Historic Colonial Williamsburg, Va.

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