

World and Nation

Murder not racially motivated, sheriff says

From Associated Press reports

LUMBERTON — One Lumbee Indian was in custody for the slaying of Robeson County judicial candidate Julian Pierce as the suspected triggerman committed suicide Tuesday in what the sheriff called romantic instead of political turmoil.

"I can assure the world that there was no political involvement in the case," said Robeson County Sheriff Hubert Stone. "I think that Robeson County will understand that it's just another murder."

Investigators had speculated that the slaying of Pierce — a popular 42-year-old Lumbee Indian and lawyer who founded the Lumbee River Legal Services — was linked to drug traffickers in the county or was a political assassination. Such theories heightened tension in the county, where Indian concerns over corruption and drug trafficking had spilled over Feb. 1 when two Indians took hostages for several hours at The Robesonian newspaper.

But Stone said tension should ease since the motive has shifted from conspiracy theories to a sordid story of the heart.

Stone said Sandy Gordon Chavis, 24, of Pembroke was arrested Tuesday after a warrant was issued at 4 a.m. charging him with murder in the shotgun slaying of Pierce early Saturday.

A murder warrant also was issued for John Anderson Goins, 24, of Pembroke. But Stone said Goins sought refuge in his father's house, hid in a closet and shot himself in the head. Goins' father was not home.

Goins had dated Shannon Bullard, 16, the daughter of Pierce's girlfriend, Ruth Locklear.

"They (Goins and Bullard) started having problems and they broke up," Stone said. "Two warrants were issued last week by the girlfriend's mother, charging Goins with trespassing. Goins felt Pierce had something to do with it. He got mad and

he killed him."

Pierce, who had been divorced since December 1983, was shot in the chest and side early Saturday morning. The gunman blasted twice through a broken window in Pierce's kitchen door and entered the room to shoot him again in the head with a 12-gauge shotgun, Stone said.

Stone said Chavis had said in a confession that Goins, who had worked as a security guard in Raleigh, pulled the trigger on the pump shotgun that killed Pierce. The sheriff also said that there were no racial undertones to the killing and that the shotgun belonged to Chavis' brother.

The sheriff said Chavis and Goins came from "very outstanding families" and neither had prior criminal records other than traffic violations. Stone said Goins had gone to Locklear's house after the slaying to talk her but "didn't tell her he had killed Mr. Pierce."

Pierce was running against District

Attorney Joe Freeman Britt in the May 3 Democratic primary for Superior Court judge. Because there was no Republican opposition, the primary winner would have been the judge after the November election.

County commissioners here also adopted a resolution asking Britt, a white man with a reputation for never losing a death penalty case, to ask the state attorney general for a special prosecutor. Because Pierce is dead, current state law says that Britt will become Superior Court judge. But supporters of Pierce planned to meet Thursday with Gov. Jim Martin and ask him to call a special session of the legislature to seek an exception to the law for Robeson County.

Stone was joined at the news conference by SBI Director Robert Morgan and Thomas McNally, an FBI special agent. Stone had requested outside help in the probe immediately after learning of Pierce's slaying Saturday morning.

Connecticut voters pick Bush, Dukakis in state primaries

From Associated Press reports

HARTFORD, Conn. — Michael Dukakis defeated Jesse Jackson in the Connecticut presidential primary Tuesday night and bid for a victory that would reassure Democratic leaders about his troubled candidacy. Dukakis regained a narrow advantage in the duel for national convention delegates.

George Bush was the runaway Republican winner and surefire nominee as well, following Bob Dole's withdrawal earlier in the day.

With 79 percent of the precincts reporting, Massachusetts Gov. Dukakis had 59 percent of the vote from his New England neighbors, ending a recent series of poor performances. Jackson, landslide winner last weekend in Michigan and the man with momentum in the race, had 28 percent of the vote.

Sen. Albert Gore lagged with 8 percent and Sen. Paul Simon, who ignored the state, was receiving slightly more than 1 percent.

On the Republican side, Bush had 71 percent to Dole's 20 percent. The vice president's lone remaining challenger, former TV evangelist Pat Robertson, had 3 percent.

Dole ends presidential quest

WASHINGTON — Sen. Bob Dole, his White House hopes crushed by George Bush, ended his Republican presidential bid on Tuesday, saying, "You come to trust your instincts to tell you it's over."

"I've been beaten before and no doubt will again. But I've never been defeated and never will be," he said.

"The one thing you learn how to do pretty well in our business is to count. You come to trust your instincts to tell you it's over. In my heart I know that time is now. I congratulate George Bush and wish him well in November," the Kansas senator said.

Land Day tainted with violence

RAMALLAH, Occupied West Bank — Israel's army isolated the occupied territories Tuesday, but Palestinians threw gasoline bombs

News in Brief

at patrolling soldiers and the Israelis opened fire, wounding eight of the demonstrators.

The unprecedented crackdown on the 1.5 million Arabs in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip was aimed at halting four months of unrest and at preventing mass demonstrations by Palestinians on Wednesday's 12th anniversary of Land Day, when Israeli soldiers killed six Arabs protesting land confiscation.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron, Israel's military chief of staff, threatened for the first time Tuesday to close the territories for an extended period.

Protests continue in Armenia

MOSCOW — Residents of a city at the center of a tense ethnic dispute stayed home again Tuesday protesting official refusal to transfer control of their region to another Soviet republic, a newspaper said.

The government newspaper Izvestia also provided the first breakdown of Armenian and Azeri casualties in Feb. 28 rioting in the city of Sumgait in Azerbaijan, and it denied reports that children had been killed.

Conrail engineer sentenced

TOWSON, Md. — A former Conrail engineer was sentenced today to the maximum term of five years in prison and fined \$1,000 for causing 16 deaths in Amtrak's worst train accident.

Rick Gates, 33, of Essex, Md., pleaded guilty Feb. 16 to the single misdemeanor manslaughter count and admitted in a statement of facts to smoking marijuana on the train and failing to make several safety checks that might have prevented the accident.

In return for the guilty plea, Baltimore County State's Attorney Sandra O'Connor agreed to consolidate the names of all 16 victims into one count, which reduced the maximum sentence from 80 years and \$16,000 in fines to five years and a \$1,000 fine.

Top Justice Department officials resign

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — The No. 2 official in the Justice Department and the head of the department's criminal division abruptly handed in their resignations today amid continuing legal problems for their boss, Attorney General Edwin Meese.

Deputy Attorney General Arnold Burns and Assistant General William Weld announced in letters to President Reagan that they were stepping down. Both have served in their positions since Oct. 17, 1986.

Their resignations, combined with the departure of Associate Attorney General Stephen Trott to become a federal judge, leave a leadership vacuum of major proportions in the

Justice Department.

Their resignations were unexpected and were disclosed to other department officials at this morning's Justice Department staff meeting, said a department source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Two assistants to Burns and two assistants to Weld also are resigning.

Neither Burns nor Weld mentioned Meese's legal problems in their resignation letters, but the sources said the attorney general's continuing legal troubles — he has been under criminal investigation for nearly a year — were significant contributing factors.

Burns' letter to Reagan said that "under your leadership, I believe we

have made important contributions to the administration of justice . . . Unfortunately, I have regretfully concluded that I must return to private life at this time."

Weld, a former U.S. attorney in Boston who has prosecuted a number of important public corruption and white-collar crime cases, told Reagan that "I am grateful to have been charged with the responsibility of seeing that justice be done without fear or favor."

Another department source, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said neither Burns nor Weld acted in belief that Meese is about to be indicted.

However, said the source, both

men are concerned because the Justice Department's image continues to be damaged due to the ongoing criminal investigation of Meese, the nation's top law enforcement officer.

Terry Eastland, a Justice Department spokesman, pointed out that it is not unusual for political appointees to leave government in the last year of an administration.

Eastland said that Burns, Weld and Stephen Trott, the associate attorney general who was confirmed as a federal judge last week, were sworn into their jobs in 1986 and that "this is 1988; this happens to be a year when people are leaving and they all happen to be leaving at the same time."

Ministry suspends Swaggart for two years

From Associated Press reports

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — Evangelist Jimmy Swaggart on Tuesday was conditionally suspended for two years by the Assemblies of God in connection with allegations that he hired a prostitute to pose naked.

He was also ordered to undergo rehabilitation for two years and was ordered out of the pulpit for a period of not less than one year. He may not appear on his television show for one year.

The Pentecostal church's General Presbytery had the final say on the fiery preacher's punishment. Its decision was more severe than the three-month suspension recom-

mended by the Louisiana branch of the church.

Gus Weill, a spokesman for Jimmy Swaggart Worldwide Ministries in Baton Rouge, La., declined immediate comment on the denomination's decision.

People approved by the church would supervise Swaggart's rehabilitation, the Rev. G. Raymond Carlson, general superintendent of the church, said at a news conference. He provided no other details of the sanctions.

The rehabilitation period would begin when Swaggart agreed to the terms in writing. He has 30 days to respond.

Carlson said he had notified Swaggart of the decision.

A member of the General Presbytery, H. Maurice Lednicki, said most of the discussion in the two-day meeting of the group was over the power of the 13-member Executive Presbytery to impose punishment in the case.

The Louisiana District had

imposed a three-month suspension from the pulpit for Swaggart and had refused to reconsider it on request of the Executive Presbytery, which sought a stiffer penalty. The executive board noted that every other Assemblies of God minister who has confessed to moral failure has been barred from the pulpit for at least a year, officials said.

Catholic Church urges Noriega to step down

From Associated Press reports

PANAMA CITY, Panama — The Roman Catholic Church on Tuesday

called for Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega to resign and offered to act as a mediator between the strongman

and opponents demanding his ouster.

A general strike continued for the ninth day, with shopowners keeping their stores closed despite a violent government crackdown against its opponents on Monday.

A church spokesman said Archbishop Marcos McGrath had talked with both sides and received "a positive impression" that a solution could be found to the agonizing crisis that has gripped Panama for over a month.

In Washington, Panamanian Ambassador Juan Sosa, speaking on behalf of ousted President Eric Arturo Delvalle, asked the United States to send a military force to remove Noriega.

The call for Noriega's resignation by the church was the first public indication of its stance on the Noriega regime. Last week, church officials privately urged Noriega, under indictment in the United States on drug trafficking charges, to step down.

After a violent government crackdown on a demonstration Monday, troops raided the Marriott Hotel, which serves as the headquarters of Panama's opposition and the foreign press.

About 20 opposition leaders and eight foreign journalists were arrested. The journalists and most of the opposition leaders were released Tuesday, although Carlos Gonzales

de la Lastra, a founder and director of the National Civic Crusade, a coalition of businesses, professional, labor and political groups, was still missing.

President Reagan's chief spokesman expressed outrage at Monday's action by Noriega's troops.

"We are all angry at this latest demonstration, at people being beaten and threatened," spokesman Martin Fitzwater said, adding that the Noriega regime "is showing its true colors. It is desperate and afraid of its own people and the free press."

The church agreed to intercede in Panama's crisis at the request of President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain, and former presidents Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela and Daniel Oduber of Costa Rica.

For the Record

Tuesday's story, "Investigation continues into senior's fatal fall," incorrectly reported the name of the woman who reported the incident to the police. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the error.

Also, The Daily Tar Heel neglected to note that the Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association sponsored Benjamin Shatz's speech in the story "Fighting AIDS Discrimination" March 29. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the omission.

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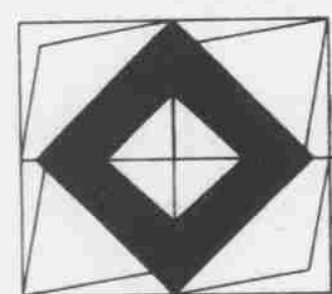
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