## —Woodlawn murder

(Continued from Page A1)

to the chest.

Baltimore County Police Department spokesman, E. Jay Miller said, "We believe that Witherspoon first shot Linda Tyler, then her son, Alphonso and then turned the gun on himself, inflicting a mortal blow to his head."

Alphonso Tyler, Sr. received the news of his son and ex-wife's death from his wife Robin who had been notified by the girlfriend of Alphonso, Jr.

"Alphonso's girlfriend went to the West Park Drive home and received no answer when she rang the doorbell. Next she looked in the window and witnessed Witherspoon sitting lifeless in a chair. It was then that she called the Police said," Robin Tyler.

Alphonso's father said, "Although Alphonso had been named most valuable player at school, he was my MVP at all times. Often when Witherspoon and Linda would argue and fight Linda would call here to speak to Alphonso would have to leave my house to go home and make sure that his mother was alright."

"Alphonso was a math major at Morgan, he thought about becoming an accountant," said Robin Tyler.

"Often I acted a coach to the many sports teams that Alphonso played on. That is how I happened to know all of his friends. We were living in the same neighborhood that the West Park Drive house is in. I had been divorced from Linda for the last three years when this happened," said Mr. Tyler.

Baltimore County Police say that this is not the first time they have been called to the West Park Drive home in order to break up a domestic dispute.

One of several neighbors to whom the AFRO spoke did not want to be identified but voiced an opinion shared by other neighbors who declared, "That household was not the peaceful one that they tried to portray."

Mr. Tyler said, "The news of the death of their friend and classmate forced many of the friends present at Alphonso's funeral to confront their own mortality. One of those friends, Danny Tyler was also Alphonso's cousin and frequented both the West Park Drive home and our house."

Mr. Tyler said, "Danny did not want to believe that Alphonso was dead, especially under these circumstances."

"The body of Linda Tyler was shipped to her home in Winston-Salem, North Carolina," said Mr. Tyler.

The police have closed the case declaring the homicide/suicide theory to be correct. None of the family or friends to whom the AFRO spoke knew why Robert Lee Witherspoon decided to kill Linda and Alphonso Tyler and then take his own life.

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## —Budget ax cuts 71

(Continued from Page A1)

their holiday now feels more like doomsday.

The layoffs came after Mayor Kurt Schmoke forewarned city council members, that if they reduced the city's property tax revenue, drastic and immediate actions would follow.

The saga began several weeks ago after the mayor and the city budget bureau set forth a balanced budget for the fiscal year. The figure of 2.2 billion dollars, stemmed from a recommended budget of 797 million dollars operating in capital, which did not coincide with city council approbations.

The final showdown resulted in a displacement of a six and a half million dollar deficit, leaving the city in a bind of reducing existing expenditures to break even.

City council cuts were locked into the category of administration in all of the agencies, which fell under personnel layoffs.

"City Council was well aware of the consequences that would follow if the property tax cut was instituted," stated an adamant Kurt Schmoke. "There was no motive of retaliation in making this decision."

"There was no way to cut without affecting personnel. It was time to bite the bullet."

Some of the smaller agencies could not handle cost cuts in personnel capacities, because it would have meant a drastic cut in services.

Other departments had vacant positions because of upcoming retirements, or were left over from the January hiring freeze (which accounted for 63 positions) that was previously in place before layoff actions, were relinquished.

Of the seventy-one excess positions, forty percent were in administrative capacities. The disparity of displaced workers ranged from recent hires, to some who have held their ground for ten years.

The most obvious effect of the cuts, will be in the delivery of service during the fiscal year. Departments most affected by the cuts are those involving the use of general funds.

Recreation and parks will see the most significant changes, twenty eight will be cut. The parks that have old and dilapidated buildings will be closed, but the fields will be kept. No imminent changes will be made in this division until the end of the summer season.

Educational grants will be cut by $37,000. Library facilities will cut eleven staffers, and reduce operating hours. Eliminating the use of city buildings during lax and after hours, are just some of the cost cutting measures in the works to save on expenditures.

The health department will see eight positions abolished, as well as the department of housing, and twenty positions in public works will be eliminated.

The department of housing and development has been able to duck the guillotine, despite across the board cuts. The commercial revitalization division was eliminated, which worked with city merchants in retail strips to help maintain physical quality, technical work, and attracting customers.

Spokesman Bill Toohey states there were no forced layoffs in the department. "People are being offered chances to fill current vacant positions, the commissioner chose to eliminate one division, instead of weakening the department as a whole.

"Some of the work load will be picked up by other divisions within the agency."

Mayor Schmoke indicated that these were just some of the initial adjustments being made. Consultants are taking a look into other ways to increase the efficiency of the inner working of each department.

"I don't feel that the layoffs will adversely affect the administrations workload. Greater efficiency will take precedence."

The city budget is now balanced, but more unrest lies in the aftermath of what is the mother of necessity — economic preservation.

## —Complaint alleges

(Continued from Page A1)

October, but the funds were not available to vendors until December, or in some cases even later — March.

Vendors who did not receive the MEAP fuel fund monies in time for the 1988 heating season have been asked by MEAP to return the unused portion. The vendors have proposed that the money be held-over until the advent of the 1989 season.

In some cases this is the only way in which the vendor can assure payment for distributing fuel to needy families whose payment vouchers were not received by the vendor in a timely fashion.

One of the vendors approved by MEAP, Linda Cooper, president of the Blue Ridge Oil Company says, "The first contract signed by the vendors stated that the unused grant funds must be returned by September, 1989.

"We were paid late for grants only after signing another contract stipulating that we change the due date on all unused grants indicating that they would now be due in May, rather than September.

Cooper said, "In the old system we would be sent the name and address of the person to whom the grant was awarded along with a check for the grant. Now we are expected to wait for long periods of time.

"In some cases the elderly and those with handicaps cannot wait until we get paid before receiving fuel. So we deliver to those people whom we know are eligible. In many cases we have developed a long term relationship with them," said Cooper.

"The vendors are upset with a system that does not help the very people it was organized to help the needy," said Linda Cooper. I do not have the power of attorney for these people. I do not have the right to say that if a customer does not use their grant by May 30th they must forfeit it all together."

Cooper said, "Many customers have no use for the fuel by the time their grants are paid to us. Suppose someone gets a grant for $200, and they only get $100 worth of fuel because that is all they need so late in the season. The vendor is expected to return the unused $100. If someone is awarded a grant, then it is their property, not mine or anyone else's."

Cooper continued with an illustration of what can go wrong with the new billing system, saying, "In some cases the results of the new billing system have hurt the very people it was intended to help. One elderly lady's fuel fund grant was sent to the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company instead of to the participating vendor (in this case a fuel company).

"BG&E refused to send the money to the fuel company and instead credited it to their account for the lady. This meant that the lady had money in her BG&E account that was needed for her heat. She heated by oil and could have frozen if the winter or other circumstances were present."

In response to the concern,Senator Young chairman of the Maryland General Assembly's Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review, said "a tentative meeting will be held on July 26 between the participating vendors, The Maryland Welfare rights Organization and myself. Sandra Brown will bring the findings established by her inquiry to the July 26 meeting. We just have to wait until then for the outcome."

Maryland Welfare Rights President, Irving Conway said, "We will resolve this problem through meeting with MEAP, they have been very understanding with us."

Attempts made by the AFRO to reach Sandra Brown, who has been director of The Maryland Energy Assistance Program for two weeks were unsuccessful.

BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN
628 N. Eutaw Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 728-8200

Circulation audited by the Audit Breau of Circulation (ABC)

John J. Oliver, Jr.
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**National Advertising Representatives:** Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., 45 W. 45th Street, New York, New York, 10036.

**Affiliated Publications: Dawn Magazine**, 295 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017, (212) 779-0444; **Washington Afro-American**; 2002 11th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. D.C. 20001, (202) 332-0080; **Richmond Afro-American**, 301 E. Clay Street, Richmond, VA 23219, (804) 649-8478; **Afro-American (National, Philadelphia, North & South Carolina)**, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, (301) 728-8200, **New Jersey Afro-American, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, (301) 728-8200.**

**Newsstand Rate:** 1 Year (Tuesday & Saturday) $52.00, 2 Years $92.00, 3 Years $116.00; Checks for subscriptions should be made payable to the Afro-American Company, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.

**EVENINGS AND SATURDAY TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Main Number | 728-8200 |
| Circulation | 728-AFRO |
| Advertising | 383-3200 |
| Nights and Weekends | 383-3232 |

The Baltimore Afro-American (USPS 040-800) is published Tuesday and Saturday for $52 per year by the Afro-American Company of Baltimore, Inc., 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Second class postage paid at Baltimore, Maryland and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Baltimore Afro-American, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.

## —Marriott announces candidacy

(Continued from Page A1)

on, and an appearance by City Council President Mary Pat Clarke.

Both Dixon and Rawlings are avid supporters, and spoke of Marriott with admiration and respect, and the new excitement that she would offer her district.

"Salima would be an exceptional delegate who would bring unity to our district. She has an extensive history of community activism, and she has paid her dues. I feel her focus on black family life, womens' issues, and higher education puts her on the cutting edge."

Delegate Tony Fulton doesn't perceive Marriott's candidacy as a factor to change his attempts to run as an incumbent.

"Salima's candidacy doesn't affect my political strategy at all. The district needs as many talented candidates as possible who can be held accountable, and take on legislative responsibilities properly.

Fulton pointed to his record as being the 'show me' candidate to support his position as one of the incumbents.

"I know the legislative process and how to use it, and my experience serving under several previous governors includes issues that affect women, childcare, and healthcare."

Delegate Ralph Hughes was more conservative in his comments on Marriott, as well as on his possible re-election. "At this time I am leaving my options open," Hughes told the AFRO.

Concerning Marriott, Hughes feels she will be one of a number of qualified candidates who will be running for the 40th district.

## Police file suit

(Continued from Page A1)

to awarding promotions," stated lodge attorney Michael Marshall.

Since its implementation, the rate of minority rankings has been sparse, but as with any new system, it takes time to get desired results. The new system has increased the number of blacks in the top forty from three to five, and women from two to three.

The plaintiffs contend they are being arbitrarily "clumped" together, which denies them equal opportunity for promotions.

"We're only asking for a fair solution to the problem. By using this system, minorities are dropping further down the list, and other qualified candidates are losing ground."

Marshall neglected to call the suit reverse discrimination, based on the fact that the race and gender of the candidates in no way bears on the new system's mode of operation, but called it a fight for equal protection.

When asked what solutions he and his clients wanted to see implemented, Marshall did not have a stated plan of strategy on the board to counteract the present updated system.

This lawsuit flies in the face of what was to become a legitimized solution to its predecessor, which was targeted as discriminatory and racily biased.

Jessie Hopkins, director of personnel of the Civil Service Commission, refutes that the new system is hurting minorities and women. "This test is strictly race neutral. We've had an expert, Dr. Uttz, who has been working on new systems of testing for the past five years.

"We are working on a system that is fair and valid. Our critics and those filing the suit aren't allowing enough time (or valid solutions) for it to get the kind of results we all want to see."

The most vociferous group has been the NAACP. Their report on community and police relations released last month, sharply criticized the department for its procedures in minority promotions.

The NAACP wants to see the commission provide two separate lists, one for blacks, the other for whites to evaluate the scores. They feel this would balance the chances for minorities, because they only make up twenty percent of those taking the test.

"They (the commission) act as if both groups are on equal footing before taking the test, but minorities are still trying to get ahead with one arm tied behind their backs."

The first Labor Day was organized by the Central Labor Union on Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City, according to the U.S. Labor Department. By 1885 the idea of a workers' holiday had spread and Labor Day was celebrated in many of the country's industrial centers.



# Racism in Church longstanding, black Catholics note

By AFRO Staff Writers

WASHINGTON

Many devout Catholics and community leaders have endorsed the Rev. George A. Stallings Imani Temple — and have pledged their support despite his suspension from the priesthood by Washington Cardinal James Hickey — although the move has fueled a debate that the newly formed congregation will divide the Church along racial lines.

"I don't disagree with Father Stallings," said Pauline Jones, an 80-year member of St. Augustine's, the District's oldest black parish. "But he and I have discussed this before and I feel he should work within the church."

Photo by Courtney

**Thinking alone, but surrounded by thousands, Father Stallings prepares for his new church's inaugural mass.**

Rev. Stallings, a 41 year-old native of New Bern, N.C. was suspended less than three weeks after he announced the formation of the Imani Temple in defiance of church protocol. Cardinal Hickey declared Stalling "a priest no longer in good standing because of his persistent act of disobedience." The move followed a triumphant six-hour mass attended by more than 4,000 in the sweltering chapel of Howard University's Law School July 2.

Under the suspension, Rev. Stallings is prohibited from officiating at baptisms, weddings, funerals and annointing the sick. "This act of suspension remains in effect until you have renounced this act of disobedience in accordance to the disciplines and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church," Cardinal Hickey wrote.

"Father Stallings knew he would be suspended," said Mrs. Jones, who added the preacher's successful inaugural mass — which reportedly netted more than $30,000 — was no basis for projecting the viability of the Imani Temple.

"I don't think it will fold," she continued, "but many of the people were there Sunday out of curiosity. Ask me what I think six months from now. "You can't base the future on just one Sunday."

But those attending Sunday's service said they felt renewed, and were adamant in their stance to join Imani's congregation. "I think this church will be full of young, intelligent professionals who will come back to the church," said Richard DeCarlo, a former member of St. Benedict the Moor in N.E.

"I decided to leave the church because I was dissatisfied and inactive," Mr. DeCarlo added. "It was one of my students who helped me get back into the church. I left again after the priest assigned there was replaced by a white priest who toned everything down. When he did this the congregation's membership dwindled to half its numbers."

Other former St. Benedict parishoners echoed Mr. DeCarlo, and also pointed to the removal of Yvette Franklin as principal of the school adjacent to the church. Those acts at St. Benedict, along with the removal of gospel choirs from some parishes helped to spearhead Rev. Stallings formation of Imani, observers said.

But District Archdiocese officials have denied that the quelling of Afro American church traditions at some parishes was racially motivated. "What happened at St. Benedict was not anti-black," said the Rev. William E. Lori, an aide to Cardinal Hickey who declined to elaborate further on the decision at the N.E. parish.

"We don't see the church in terms of black, white, Spanish or any other ethnic group. We see it as a big family with each parish under one head, Cardinal Hickey. The way Rev. Stallings is putting the whole issue is that only black priests can minister to black parishoners and that white priests can minister to white parishoners, and this is simply untrue."

"The Cardinal agrees that Father Stallings concerns need to be addressed. However, he does not think this is the way to do things. What he is doing with the suspension is acting like the head of a family in making a good decision for the family."

Rev. Lori, while likening Rev. Stallings suspension to that of a doctor or lawyer who cannot practice without their licenses told the AFRO he did not know how many priests had faced the same disciplenary measures from the Washington Archdiocese. "I wouldn't know that without research and it's not exactly the sort of thing you want to remember," he said.

"With the suspension the door to reconciliation is open. If Rev. Stallings wants to come back, there needs to be some dialogue between him and the Cardinal."

But many, including Rev. Stallings, feel that Hickey's action is the first step toward excommunication from the Church—a move undertaken on a larger scale when the Pope banished Archbishop Marcel Lefebre in an elaborate 1987 ceremony.

"I don't know how far this whole thing is going to go," said broadcaster and former seminary student Jerry Phillips. "We all support Rev. Stallings. There is a heavy Irish influence in the American Church, that's the problem. There is a lack of understanding with American Catholicism. You have all kinds of racism".

But although Mr. Phillips agreed with Rev. Stallings philosophy, he said he doubted that many black Catholics would forsake their parishes. "In no way will there be a mass exodus from the Church," Mr. Phillips said.

Norm Nixon, a substitute morning talk show host on radio station WOL said the station had not taken an official stance, but vowed to encourage his listeners to give Rev. Stallings support. "I will keep my listeners abreast of what's going on," he said.

While a spokesman for Rev. Stallings told the AFRO that the priest was away from the city July 5, there appeared to be no regret over his decision.

"I'm relieved about the suspension," Rev. Stallings said. "But the relief would be complete if we can get this matter out of the way so that we as an African American people can put the Imani Temple on a solid foundation."

Still, for Pauline Jones, her faith in Catholicism outdistances racism as a priority. "I will not go to the Imani Temple" she said. "I am a black Roman Catholic fighting racism within the system".

"It's true that the Church is one of the most segregated places there is on Sundays. The Bishop knows this and he knows that we black Catholics are doing our own thing within the system".

"We are proud of our black heritage at St. Augustine."

Rev. Stallings Imani Temple does not have a permanent home, but will meet Sundays at Suitland High School in nearby Prince Georges County.

## 'We can't be excommunicated from God', some exclaim

The mood was a defiant one amongst many worshippers at Imani Temple last week.

"You can't get excommunicated from God . . . the church can't take you away from God," one worshipper said, during the capacity-filled mass.

And Father Stallings echoed those words telling participants not to "worry about those in high places." We are not here today of our own doing, but of theirs," he said referring to Washington's Cardinal Hickey's disapproval of the mass.

The charismatic Father wore a white robe adorned with the colors of Africa — red, black and green — as he spoke to more than 4,000 people packed into the auditorium on Howard University's Van Ness Campus.

The mass began with a procession of African bells and music, an act of remembrance of African ancestors. "We're making way for the saints. We are letting the ancestors know that there is plenty of good room," he said.

And he encouraged participants not to feel disheartened by the attitude of the church. "A lot of you came today below a load of shame . . . . remember there will be men and women who will put you down. But, don't be ashamed. Oh, it's amazing what so-called Christians will do," he said.

"Jesus is the wind," he said, recalling the significance of having God behind those who believe.

And many plainly did.

Following the service, Daisy Manning, a member of Shiloh Baptist Church, said, "I feel the service was great. Any man that could bring out this many people in such a short amount of time and give them such a dynamic message is truly a man of God. I will visit again."

Meanwhile, District resident Paul Thompson called the mass "a revolutionary, historical moment."

"It was a historical moment. I left (the Catholic church) around '69, '70 because of the hypocrisy. but I will come back to this church," said Alma Johnson.

Black Catholic Lillian Bell praised the Father for telling "the truth." "I think he told it all and correctly. We have been waiting too long," she said.

**Father Stallings reaffirms his stance to followers enroute to Imani's service at the Howard University Law School.**

**Tiffani McDonald, Crystal Proctor and Ashaki Shropshire listen to Stallings' message from the steps of the law school after limited space forced the overflow crowd outdoors. by B. Cotell.**

## Ollie walks, but Bush doens't talk

WASHINGTON — President Bush, under fire from some conservatives to pardon ex-White House aide Oliver North for his Iran-Contra crimes, avoided any public comment about a federal judge's decision to refuse to send North to prison.

Bush became aware of U.S. District Judge Gerhard Gesell's sentence shortly after it was handed down. White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater interrupted a meeting to inform Bush of the decision.

Gesell gave North a three-year suspended sentence, two years of probation, 1,200 hours of community service and a $150,000 fine for the former Marine's three convictions stemming from the worst scandal of the Reagan administration.

Fitzwater said Bush would have no comment. "We can't comment. We don't think it's appropriate," the spokesman said. Responding to questions, he added, "We have not discussed a pardon."

A number of conservatives have urged Bush to pardon North. Rep. Robert Dornan, R.-Calif., a leader of that effort, said Wednesday he still would push the cause but, in light of the sentence, would delay trying to put immediate pressure on the president.

After North was convicted, Bush said he wishes the former White House aide, whom he once labeled a "hero," had been exonerated. But because North has vowed to appeal, Fitzwater suggested any fresh comment would not be proper.

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