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Racial profiling: Police agencies keep track

NEW YORK (AP) — As Congress and the states debate how to root out racial profiling, many of the nation's police departments are moving ahead on their own, requiring officers to record the race of all drivers they stop and question.

From Washington state to Oregon to Missouri to Texas, small departments and state agencies are scrutinizing their officers' actions in a first step toward gauging how widespread racial bias among police might be.

While many police see little evidence of racism, they acknowledge the fears.

"We have to deal with perception as much as reality," Michigan State Police Col. Michael Robinson said Wednesday. "If data helps us assure some that we are not engaged in inappropriate behavior — and it gives us information to discuss

openly what is occurring out there in the community — then it's appropriate."

Two years ago, many police officials dismissed the worries. Then there were prominent allegations of profiling among the New Jersey State Police and in Florida. A Gallup poll last year found majorities of both whites and blacks convinced it exists. President Clinton required federal law-enforcement agencies to record race and gender in all stops.

Now, police officials are moving faster than lawmakers.

A year ago, no agencies were voluntarily monitoring the skin color of those they stopped, said John Crew, who heads the American Civil Liberties Union's racial profiling project. Now, there are well over 100. "We can't keep up."

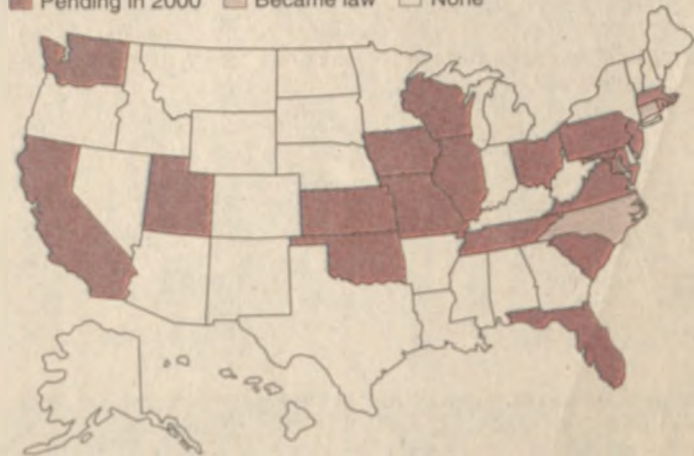
North Carolina and Connecticut are the only states that

Racial profiling

In an effort to determine if racial profiling is widespread, lawmakers nationwide have considered requiring officers to track the race of people they stop and question. Here is a look at recent racial profiling legislation.

Status of bills on racial profiling, by state

■ Pending in 2000 ■ Became law □ None



Source: American Civil Liberties Union

require police in their states to keep track of race in their traffic stops. At least 18 other states are considering similar legislation. State police are already monitoring stops or are taking steps to do so in California, Washington, Ohio, Michigan and Florida. Houston, St. Louis,

Salt Lake City, San Jose, San Diego and several other California cities all announced similar plans.

On Wednesday, the House Judiciary Committee sent to a floor vote a bill for a federal study of police statistics to investigate racial profiling.

Black ex-Coke workers attack job cuts

ATLANTA (AP) — Hundreds of black former Coca-Cola employees rallied Saturday, calling the company's massive job cuts "ethnic cleansing" and accusing the soft drink giant of severely mistreating workers.

They applauded Coca-Cola's decision not to require laid-off workers to sign a waiver forcing them to choose between participating in a discrimination lawsuit pending against the company or enjoying better severance benefits. But the workers said a future boycott of Coca-Cola by black leaders remained an option.

"Blacks in the company are humiliated, intimidated, yelled at, called the N word, treated with disrespect," said Larry Jones, a former Coke manager

"This is the real thing ... This is the real Coca-Cola."

Larry Jones
former Coke manager

who organized a meeting of about 500 laid-off black workers Saturday at a church outside Atlanta.

"This is the real thing," he said, mocking a company slogan. "This is the real Coca-Cola."

Coke spokesman Ben Deutsch called the allegations of racial discrimination in the job cuts "outrageous."

"The decisions we're making are being done for business purposes only," he said Saturday

night. "We are trying to do everything we can during this extremely difficult time to do the right thing for our current and former employees at every turn."

The waiver had left black workers with a difficult decision because of a racial discrimination suit filed last year by current and former black employees.

Signing the waiver granted workers enhanced severance benefits, but they could not be-

come members of a class of defendants if a federal judge grants class-action status to the discrimination suit. The workers also would not have been able to collect part of any future judgment if the plaintiffs win their suit.

Coke is reducing its worldwide work force by 6,000, with 2,500 of the eliminated jobs coming from its Atlanta headquarters.

Plaintiffs in the lawsuit contend that Jones, a black human resources manager, was laid off Feb. 15 after meeting with Coke President Jack Stahl to express black employees' concerns about job cuts.

"What happened on Feb. 15 was essentially ethnic cleansing," Jones said Saturday.

Coke spokesman Ben Deutsch has said Jones' dismissal was unrelated to his meeting with Stahl.

The workers demanded Saturday that Coke work harder to settle the lawsuit, develop a fairer system of employee evaluation and "stop looking at the price of the stock" to pay more attention to diversity.

"We are tired of being treated with disrespect, tired of being cheated, tired of being humiliated, tired of insults and rudeness," Jones said.

Telain Ware of Atlanta, who lost her job as a manager of global benefits Feb. 15, said Coke management saw the job cuts as a "golden opportunity to eliminate as many African-Americans as possible."

Interracial dating decision stuns campus

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) — Bob Jones University's decision to lift its half-century-old ban on interracial dating has stunned students and the fundamentalist Christian school's supporters who learned about it Friday night in a national television interview with President Bob Jones III.

"I don't think even his own secretary knew what he was going to do," said school spokesman Jonathan Pait.

Thousands of students and supporters gathered at the university's auditorium to watch

Jones' interview on CNN's "Larry King Live." People were in shock, said senior Nalon Lundy. "We didn't expect it at all," he said.

Lundy, also a sergeant with the university's public safety department, said Saturday that reporters were not permitted to interview students and faculty on campus.

Jones said the extraordinary national scrutiny the school has received since George W. Bush made a campaign appearance led to the move.

"This thing has gotten so out

"I can tell you they are not Jew-hating, they are not Catholic-hating and they are not racist. This was just an old rule that needed to be changed."

Jeff Dayton
graduate of Bob Jones University

of hand," Jones said. "All of a sudden the university is at the center of a Republican presidential debate."

Bush appeared at the school last month and later apologized

for failing to criticize the school's anti-Catholic views and racial policies.

The Greenville school banned interracial dating in the 1950s, when an Asian family

threatened to sue after their son, a student, almost married a white girl, a school spokesman has said.

The first black student was not admitted until the 1970s and the school lost its tax exemption in 1983 after a 13-year battle with the Internal Revenue Service, which said the school's policies were discriminatory.

The school had dropped the dating ban based on a biblical interpretation that God created people differently for a reason.

Jeff Dayton graduated from Bob Jones last year and now

works at a Bible gift shop across the street. He and his wife, who still attends, were surprised and happy about the decision.

"I can tell you they are not Jew-hating, they are not Catholic-hating and they are not racist," Dayton said. "This was just an old rule that needed to be changed."

The university is a popular stop for Republican candidates seeking conservative support. Bush appeared at the school shortly after he lost to Arizona Sen. John McCain in the New Hampshire primary.

Thousands march on Florida's Capitol

Protest affirmative action changes

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Thousands of demonstrators chanting "Shame on Bush" jammed the state Capitol grounds Tuesday, demanding that Gov. Jeb Bush back off his plan to ban racial and gender preferences in university admissions and state contracting.

Pouring into Tallahassee from around the country, the demonstrators said they feared Bush's plan to end affirmative action would erase the gains blacks and other minorities have made since the civil rights movement. Bush has put portions of the plan into effect through executive order, but other segments still need legislative approval.

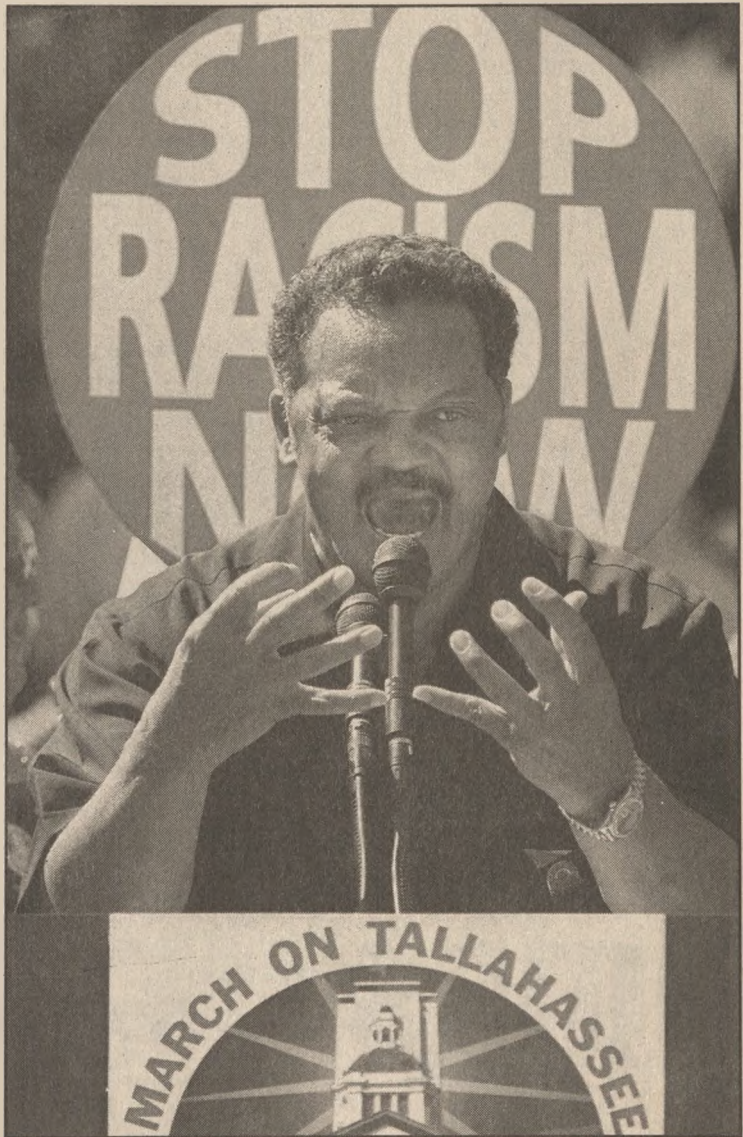
"This is the first step towards resegregation," said the Rev. Timothy McDonald, who came from Atlanta.

The rally was timed to coincide with governor's State of the State address and the opening of the legislative session.

Police had no crowd estimates by early afternoon. Participants included the Rev. Jesse Jackson, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume, the Rev. Martin Luther King III, members of Congress and state legislators.

Protesters sang "Amazing Grace" and "We Shall Overcome," and waved signs reading "Jeb is Bush League," "Jeb Crow" and "Bush Whack."

Inside the Capitol, Bush defended the plan during his address:



Associated Press

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, vents his opposition to Gov. Bush's One Florida Plan before a packed crowd of marchers, estimated at over 20,000, on Tuesday in Tallahassee, Fla.

Self-destruction traps communities

ST. PETERSBURG —

Throughout the nation, self-destructiveness continues to trap many black communities in poverty and crime. This self-destructiveness is expressed in many ways, but three of the most telling manifestations of it are vandalism, theft and the refusal to donate money to black causes.

Monetary costs aside, the long-term damage of these phenomena can be measured by the degradation heaped upon adults, the fear instilled in outsiders — especially potential investors — and the sense of hopelessness adopted by far too many children.

Here in St. Petersburg, where I live and work, vandals and thieves struck with a vengeance the other night, derauling, at least temporarily, a self-help entrepreneurial project that would help hundreds of residents if it can get off the ground.

The old Yellow Cab Co. building, in a blighted area, had been vacant for several years when Rodney Bennett and others reopened it as a non-profit business and training center. Although the organization, called New Beginnings, is struggling to find money, it manages to provide jobs for

young people and offers inexpensive vehicle services. Soon, Bennett, who volunteers his time, wants to offer service and training in computer repair, and he wants to start a community radio station.

But some area thugs gave Bennett and others in the group a dose of reality by breaking every large window facing the side street, pulling light fixtures from their sockets, vandalizing and overturning desks, ripping the alarm system from the wall and ripping doors off their hinges. The thugs went outside and damaged several recreation vehicles and buses that were being restored, and they stole thousands of dollars in furniture and appliances.

Needless to say, these acts are a morale killer. And the irony is obvious.

"Some of the kids who did this are probably some of the kids we'd be trying to help."



Bill Maxwell

Columnist

Bennett told the St. Petersburg Times. "Some of these kids have too much time on their hands. ... I can't say bad kids did bad things. Unfortunately, for what they've done, they've hurt a serious community effort. This kind of thing really set us back."

Perhaps these are not "bad kids." But they certainly did a bad thing, an act indicative of a do-nothing attitude that blocks progress in many black communities nationwide.

New Beginnings could be a valuable incubator for many offshoot businesses if it were supported by black residents, especially those who have money. Instead, black residents are doing what they too often do — nothing.

Following riots in 1996 that left many businesses destroyed or damaged, a flurry of activity occurred at the local, state and national level to assist the area. Since then, however, the old behaviors and attitudes have returned. Not enough middle-class blacks, who are beyond living from check to check, are pitching in to help take care of their own. Even though many of these people were born and reared in St. Petersburg, they lack a sense of owning and nurturing their old turf.

Black leaders commemorate voting rights

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Black leaders must remember the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and “get into the trenches” to fight racial profiling and attacks on affirmative action, the Rev. Al Sharpton said Saturday at the finale of a voting rights commemoration.

“We’re here today to reconnect with the giants that brought us this far,” he told about 500 people in the same downtown Montgomery church where King preached in the 1950s.

Sharpton and King’s son, Southern Christian Leadership Conference president Martin Luther King III, spoke at the conclusion of a week-long march from Selma retracing the footsteps of the 1965 march that



Associated Press

Martin Luther King III, left, the Rev. Hosea Williams, center, and the Rev. Al Sharpton, right, meet before entering the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church sanctuary to deliver their speeches to Selma and Montgomery marchers, Saturday in Montgomery, Ala.

led to passage of the Voting Rights Act.

King and Sharpton, president of New York City-based National Action Network, spoke after a group of 120 mainly college and high school students

completed the 54-mile trek.

“We’re not home yet,” Sharpton said.

“We’re not home as long as affirmative action is being fought in this country, as long as there’s racial profiling.”

Black leaders still unhappy with Adel policies

Tim Storey
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

ADEL — Local African American leaders say they are unhappy with the way the city of Adel is handling recent issues brought to their attention.

Bob Jones, representative of the NAACP in Adel, said he has repeatedly went before the city council, trying to find solutions to what he feels are major problems.

Jones, a native of Georgia, returned in 1997 to take care of his aging parents. While still a young man, he said, he left the state for Miami, Fla., due to the terrible conditions present throughout Georgia for African Americans.

"I got tired of the way black people were being treated in Georgia," he said.

A member of the NAACP for more than 40 years, Jones has marched with Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton. He has been the representative for the NAACP in Adel for about a year. Jones is also a member of the Rainbow Coalition and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

When first returning to the state, Jones says he spent most of his time in Tifton, until he met his wife, an Adel native. It was about this time he says, that he noticed the disturbing lack of minority police officers in the city.

"I didn't see any black policemen, just white policemen," he explained. "I was scared to come to Adel."

"I didn't see any black policemen, just white policemen. I was scared to come to Adel."

Bob Jones
representative of the NAACP in Adel

Jones said it reminded him too much of the past: "It was basically the way I left it," he said.

Jones said he was also appalled at the living conditions for African Americans in the city. "I just started looking around," he said. "It was disgusting to see how far minorities were behind in life as far as jobs, promotions for jobs and economically."

Jones said he decided to go to the city council and see what could be done to correct these problems. At the head of his list is the lack of minority policemen in Adel.

Jones said he has not gotten the answers he was looking for. He also claims Police Chief Kirk Gordon has made things difficult.

"Why does the chief dig up dirt on the people we bring in?" he asks.

But when contacted about Jones' allegations, Gordon said Jones "has not done any research," and doesn't know the facts.

Gordon said in January of this year, an African American officer was hired. He said the officer, Rudolph Robinson III, is currently undergoing training.

"He is working with dispatchers and learning radio work," Gordon said.

The chief also said he plans to have Robinson certified, but cannot do so at this time, explaining, "I can't send him to the academy until April 10."

The chief went on to say that he is not trying to hinder hiring minority policemen.

He said he is required by law to do background checks on all applicants' driving histories as well as criminal background checks.

Gordon said a major reason Adel has so few minority policemen was a lack of people applying.

"The biggest problem through the years is we have not had a lot of applications from minorities," stated Gordon.

"It's not that we don't want them. I'd love to have some black officers. It would benefit the department and the city of Adel."

Gordon also objects to Jones' charges of racism. Jones has said he thinks Gordon is racist.

"I'm not," Gordon said firmly. "I try to be fair: black, white, it doesn't matter. I think if you ask the citizens of Adel, they will tell you the same thing."

Jones went further to state that he no longer has any confidence in Mayor Richard Barr.

"I overestimated him," Jones said of Barr. "He made a lot of

promises and hasn't come through."

Jones is not alone in criticizing the city. Greg Paige, Councilman for District 1, said he feels much the same way. He also feels the black community is not getting the attention it needs.

"My phone rings every day," he said. "They've got questions, and we should give them answers. These questions need to be answered, and answered now."

Currently, Adel has two African American city councilmen, Greg Paige and Tony Scruggs. Paige said he still feels left out.

"Sometimes I feel like packing my bags and going home," he said in frustration. He said Barr has not reached out to him.

"I don't believe he is talking to me or the other black city councilman," he stated.

Jerome Carter, a member of the NAACP and Brothers Helping Others, has joined Jones at several council meetings and felt the city is not doing anything. "What's the purpose of having a city council meeting if you can't get answers?" he asked.

At the last council meeting, Paige suggested forming a special committee to look into addressing the problem.

For his part, Chief Gordon said he would welcome a special committee. "I'm in agreement with that," the chief said.

To contact reporter Tim Storey, please call 244-3400, ext. 280.

LDOSTA DAILY

www.sgaonline.com

March 20
2000

Hispanic workers turn out for census

Hundreds attend Fiesta Latino

By Victoria English
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA— About 300 Hispanic farm workers and their families stood up to be counted Saturday.

Census 2000 took on a party atmosphere at the Knights of Columbus hall. Fiesta Latino was an opportunity for local Hispanic farm workers to come into town, enjoy some food and entertainment, and be counted in the census.

The project was the brainchild of members of Amigos, a subcommittee of Project Change. Frank Norman, executive director of Project Change, was at the fiesta.

"The goal of Project Change is to promote racial harmony throughout the community," said Norman. "Amigos focuses on dispelling the racist attitudes held in the community toward its Hispanics citizens."

Amigos teamed up with representatives of Telamon Corporation to organize the event, and many local businesses and religious organizations participated. "Valdosta Food Bank, Learning Tree, Knights of Columbus, Cooper Equipment, The Haven, Sam's, Cracklin' Good, Airport Church of Christ and St. John



Victoria English / The Valdosta Daily Times

Fiesta Latino was an opportunity for area Hispanic farm workers to be counted in Census 2000. Food and entertainment was provided through area donations to the Telamon Corporation. Area religious organizations provided transportation.

Continued from Page 1A

Census

Catholic Church were some of the organizations that helped with the event," said Carmen Wilkinson, Telamon case manager.

Religious organizations provided buses to bring the farm workers in from the camps and take them home when the evening was over.

The event did not begin until 4 p.m. because most of the farm workers had to work.

"They are hard-working people," said Danielle Buehrer. Buehrer teaches English as a second language (ESL) to farm workers in Echols county.

The ESL program is scheduled to end April 8; however, Buehrer hopes that through community support and government grants, the program can be made year-round and offered to other camps in the region.

The Georgia Farm Workers Health Program was represented by Julissa Clapp. "The goal of this program is to provide preventative health care to the farm workers," said Clapp. The program allows the farm work-

ers to have better health, which reduces the amount of work missed due to illness and injury, she said.

The most common injuries seen are back injuries due to the stooping and heavy lifting the work requires, and dermatitis and ocular problems resulting from pesticide exposure, Clapp said. Dr. Donald Mirate, an area ophthalmologist, provides eye care services to the Hispanics, she added.

Southern Physicians Care on the Madison Highway provides health care for the farm workers and has a bilingual staff on duty, Clapp said.

Janie McGhin, a nurse practitioner, said the health care program needs more support from the medical community and the establishment of a clinic for workers and their families.

The next meeting of Amigos is at 11 a.m. April 11 at the Project Change headquarters, 903 N. Patterson Street.

To contact reporter Victoria English
please call 244-3480, ext. 237

Continued from Page 1A

Davis



Paul Leavy/The Valdosta Daily Times
Lowndes Middle School Principal Fred Davis, right, stands with lawyer Roger Dodd Tuesday night as the Lowndes County School Board meeting comes to a close.

Davis, Evans forced from LMS posts

Action occurs behind BOE's closed doors

By Peter Failor
VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — Two Lowndes Middle School administrators were transferred from their posts Tuesday after an hour-long, closed-door executive session and a decision which left the 500 who attended asking one question: Why?

No reason was given to the crowd.

Fred Davis, Lowndes Middle School's principal, and Marie Evans, assistant principal, were transferred to other jobs in the system at the behest of Superintendent Tom Hagler, who said he could not reveal why he made the decision because of its status as a personnel matter, decided in private.

"I will be reassigning him," said Hagler, adding that Davis will be transferred to the Teacher Resource Center.

After the decision, Roger Dodd, who was representing Davis, said he could not understand why the decision was made in light of the large crowd that turned out in support of Davis.

"If that's true," he said of the decision, "it's a sad day for the



Paul Leavy/The Valdosta Daily Times
People lined the walls at the Lowndes County Board of Education Tuesday evening waiting to hear what type of action the board would take concerning Lowndes Middle School Principal Fred Davis. The room had more than 100 people sitting and standing, and another 400 waiting outside.

"It is at the superintendent's discretion to remove and reassign any employee without the board's approval."

Glenn Copeland
chairman, Lowndes County Board of Education

Lowndes County School System, but we want to explore additional, amicable discussion."

Marie Evans, who was also

transferred, said she didn't know where she would be sent, adding she was called in for a two-minute conversation and simply

told changes had to be made.

"I do my job," she said, fighting back tears. "I'd like to know why, too."

Earlier, when the board voted 6-1 to approve administration contracts — board member James Council Jr. opposed the motion — they made it clear the decision to transfer Davis and Evans was not in their hands.

See DAVIS Page 7A

there was no justification given for removing the popular administrators.

"If there's a reason why he's being removed from his position, the people have a right to know," said Darlene Myers, adding that Davis was one of her teachers when she was in school.

A group of staff members from LMS — who did not want

to be identified because of what they agreed was a climate of fear created by the decision — said they had no clue why it happened, either.

"It's going to be very hard on everyone," said one of the staff members.

To contact reporter Peter Failor, please call 244-3400, ext. 247.

OUR NATION

2A — Thursday, March 23, 2000

Cop killing raises racial questions

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Police were accustomed to being called to Fidas Restaurant, a late-night diner where people gathered, and often brawled, when the nightclubs closed.

But one night in January, a disturbance didn't end with the usual roundup of troublemakers.

An off-duty black officer rushed to aid two white officers, who mistook him for a suspect and shot him to death.

The debate over whether prejudice or bad judgment was to blame has reached Washington, where Rep. Patrick Kennedy, D-R.I., has asked the Congressional Black Caucus to examine the case. On Monday, he will introduce legislation that would create a task force to study racism in police departments and other government agencies.

"This not a problem with Rhode Island. It is a national problem," said Joseph Almeida, a black state representative and former Providence police officer. "Somebody should not have to have died to bring this up."

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

March
4, 2000

www.sgaonline.com

50 Cents

The Valdosta Daily Times

Friday, March 24, 2000 — 3A

Continued from Page 1A

School

Transfer decision sparks anger

Dozens gather to oppose school system's actions

By Peter Fallor
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — Around 60 citizens, angered over the Lowndes County school system's still-unexplained decision to transfer two Lowndes Middle School administrators, met Thursday at Riverside Church of Christ to think of ways to fight back.

The 6-1 decision Tuesday approved Superintendent Tom Hagler's plan to move longtime Lowndes Middle School principal

Fred Davis to the Teacher Resource Center and Assistant Principal Marie Evans to an undisclosed location within the system. Board members maintained they can only approve contracts and it is up to the superintendent who will work where.

"Right now we don't know why he's (Davis) being moved with the exception that he would not violate his integrity, and that's what we will stand on until told something different," said Irene Miller, who was acting as organizer for the first of what is planned to be many meetings.

Miller said a petition drive started three days ago in support of keeping Davis in his job had amassed more than 1,288 names. She said the group is determined to tap into that support.

"It's never too late," said Miller, suggesting the group form a phone bank to help tap into resources and discuss ways to send a message to the Lowndes County Board of Education members — if not to replace them in the upcoming elections.

At the request of one of those in attendance, the crowd broke off into groups to brainstorm ideas to formulate into a list, which a steering committee is to then review and start setting into motion.

After a half-hour brainstorm session, each group leader read their group's suggestions. They ranged from encouraging people to register to vote to oust the county school board members to

See SCHOOL on Page 3A



Paul Levy/The Valdosta Daily Times

John Iverson leads his brainstorming group in a strategy discussion during Thursday afternoon's meeting at River Street Church of Christ.

contacting American Civil Liberties Union representatives.

Jerome Tucker, who was selected to be the newly-formed group's spokesperson, said the movement has two initial goals. First, he said, he wants to emphasize that citizen frustration is not only about Davis; and second, the group wants a "fair system."

"They are elected to vote," said Tucker about the board, "not to pass the decision making process to someone else."

Tucker said it was particularly disturbing that the students of Lowndes Middle have not been told why they are losing their principal, and they will be deprived of Davis' leadership.

People have questions about the decision, and Thursday's meeting was the first step, according to Tucker.

"As citizens, we have to make certain the board is accountable for their actions," he said.

To contact reporter Peter Fallor, please call 244-3400, ext. 247.

VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

March 27
27, 2000

www.sgaonline.com

50 Cents

Barnes' education plan ready on paper

But road to reality is long

ATLANTA (AP)— The way he rocks and fidgets and rolls one sentence into the other without pause, Gov. Roy Barnes sounds as giddy about making his school-reform plan reality as a third grader on the last day before summer vacation.

"Listen, I am the most impatient person on the face of the

earth," Barnes said last week, unable to sit still in the rocker in his office.

The governor eagerly rattles off changes to come in the next year. This spring, schools will test fourth, sixth and eighth graders in math, English



Roy Barnes

and reading to get an early sense of how they're performing. A new program to help struggling students catch up by the third grade will be launched next fall.

But the 179-page education bill awaiting Barnes' signature is anything but a quick fix. Critics say it's too slow, bogged down by the creation of a new education bureaucracy.

Some of the bill's most drastic provisions won't kick in until Georgia's current crop of middle schoolers are headed to college.

And Barnes, assuming he

stays in office for a second term, will be getting ready to move out of the governor's mansion.

The meat of Barnes' plan is a statewide series of tests in grades one through 12 that will be used to judge whether schools are preparing students sufficiently in reading, writing, math, social studies and science.

Schools that earn high scores will be rewarded with teacher bonuses. Schools that fail will be punished.

A new Office of Education Accountability will set the testing

standards and enforce them. Though the agency should be up and running later this year. And though some schools will get practice runs at the tests sooner, the first wave that counts for rewards and penalties isn't expected until the 2003-2004 school year.

And the harshest penalties for failing schools, which include letting students choose another public school and the firing of teachers and administrators, don't kick in until a school has

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From page 1A

Paper: Governor insists students would benefit immediately

flunked the tests for three years in a row. That would be at least six years away.

"The kids in middle school aren't going to have any benefit from this now, and kindergartners probably will have already been lost since it's the early grades where the foundation is laid," said Senate Minority Leader Eric Johnson, R-Savan-

nah.

Some Republicans in the Legislature said previous analyses of Georgia schools identified about 70,000 children trapped in public schools. They complained that Barnes is wasting valuable time waiting for new tests and new accountability office.

"That's the problem with set-

ting up the new bureaucracies was that it slows the whole process down," Johnson said. "He's going to have to start from scratch."

Barnes insists students, particularly in the early grades, will benefit immediately.

Schools will have money in the fall for teachers to work with small groups of struggling stu-

dents in kindergarten through third grade — the years education experts say are critical for getting students up to speed.

And the trial tests this spring in the fourth, sixth and eighth grades will give schools some idea of how well they're doing.

"You know what the No. 1 immediate benefit of all this is? It is a message," Barnes said.

The Valdosta Daily Times

Monday, March 27, 2000 — 3A

Lewis' bill outlaws race-based searches at borders

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rep. John Lewis is sick of waiting for a report on allegations of racial discrimination by U.S. Customs Service workers, so the Georgia congressman has proposed a bill to try to speed up the process.

Lewis, D-Atlanta, admits many of the questions raised in his Civil Rights for International Travelers Act could be answered by an independent panel that is studying the agency. But Lewis expected the panel's report by July, and he fears more delays could lead to more race-based searches at airports and border crossings.

"When there is a deliberate, systematic effort to single out a passenger because of race, color, or creed, that is racial profiling," said Lewis, a veteran civil rights leader who was wounded in the infamous "Bloody Sunday" clash 35 years ago in Selma, Ala.

Customs Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly created the review panel last April amid mounting allegations that agents were searching international travelers for drugs based on their race or national origin.

The commission is composed of officials from other government agencies and has access to all Customs records.

Customs spokesman Dennis Murphy said the report should be ready soon.

"It took longer for them to do it than we thought it would initially," he said.

Lewis plans to keep his bill on the table even if the report surfaces, although he doubts he'll be able to push it through the Republican-controlled Congress this session.

In addition to requiring an

annual report to Congress before April 1, the bill mandates periodic search training for Customs agents.

It also bans intrusive searches based on race, religion, gender, national origin or sexual orientation, unless inspectors are acting on specific information about a suspect.

Amanda Buritica, who settled her lawsuit against the Customs Service for \$400,000, applauded Lewis' effort. Buritica said agents targeted her because she was a native of Colombia. They held her for 25 hours, X-rayed her for illegal drugs, and gave her laxatives.

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Rep. John Lewis
D-Atlanta

Governor signs hate crimes bill

ATLANTA (AP) — At a Jewish synagogue where vandals last year painted swastikas and slogans, Gov. Roy Barnes signed Georgia's new hate crimes law Thursday.

He called it a strong signal that the state will not tolerate acts spawned by prejudice.

"With this bill, we're sending a clear message to would-be criminals: Georgia does not tolerate crime. But even more importantly, Georgia does not tolerate hatred and bigotry as reasons for crime," he said.

Barnes signed the measure at Congregation Or VeShalom in DeKalb County, where one night in November vandals painted the Nazi symbol and wrote in large black letters, "Go

home, bloodsuckers."

"This crime drew upon centuries of prejudice and injustice and bias and stereotype," Barnes said. "It inflicted a specific terror on this congregation and a broad terror on the entire Jewish community. Because crimes like these affect whole communities, they deserve stricter punishment..."

The new law takes effect in July.

To avail themselves of the enhanced penalties the law prescribes, prosecutors must serve notice before trial that they will prosecute the defendant under the hate crimes law.

Then the jury must decide if the crime was committed because of bias or prejudice.