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Oakland, Calif.
Tribune
(Cir. D 225,038, Sat. 209,931,
Sun. 251,534)

MAY 21 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Angela Link To Legal Aid Tossed Out

EL CENTRO (AP)—A federal commission has dismissed as unfounded Reagan administration charges that California Rural Legal Assist-

ance lawyers were "improperly" involved with black activist Angela Davis and the Soledad Brothers.

Commission Chairman Robert B. Williamson said yesterday the three-judge panel had asked the state for more evidence on its charges against the CRLA but received none.

He said the commission specifically asked for details on allegations concerning Miss Davis and three black Soledad Prison inmates accused of killing a white guard.

"But no evidence whatsoever has been produced to support any claim of misconduct by CRLA personnel or attorneys regarding these matters," said Williamson, a retired chief justice of Maine.

A report by Lewis K. Uhler, state director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, charged CRLA attorneys "intervened" at the prison in an effort to arrange a meeting between Miss Davis and one of the inmates.

During yesterday's proceedings the commission heard testimony from an Imperial County welfare worker who stated termination of the CRLA program would cause bitterness among the poor.

Donna English said the CRLA was instrumental in the adoption of the Work Incentive Program to assist welfare recipients obtain training that would qualify them for jobs.

The commission earlier this week in Salinas found "no merit" in four of 39 charges included in the Uhler report of which more evidence was requested.

Yesterday's ruling applied to Uhler's allegation involving Miss Davis and George Jackson, one of the three Soledad inmates. He is the brother of Jonathan Jackson, who died with two convicts and a judge during the Marin County shooting last August.

The commission, appointed to investigate CRLA after Reagan vetoed its \$1.8-million budget from federal antipov-erty funds, is scheduled to consider allegations regarding CRLA and other Soledad Brothers at further hearings June 3 in San Francisco.

Mrs. English testified after CRLA attorneys said earlier this week that she had been under "a form of house arrest" by welfare officials because she intended to go before the commission.

She was allowed to appear on leave from her work without pay.

CRLA attorneys had won "admiration and respect" from low-income people, Mrs. English said. After Reagan's veto of the CRLA budget, some of the poor "went down to the church and lit candles in hope the veto would be overturned."

The courtroom hearing was attended by more than 100 persons, including several Mexican-Americans listening to a Spanish translation through earphones.

MAY 21 1971

FEDERAL PANEL'S FINDING

Page 1

State CRLA Attack Ruled 'Unfounded'

From The Los Angeles Times

EL CENTRO — The Federal Commission on California Rural Legal Assistance on Thursday dismissed as "totally unfounded and without merit" allegations by the administration of Gov. Ronald Reagan that CRLA attorneys were "improperly involved" with Angela Davis and three prison inmates known as the Soledad Brothers.

The commission, now holding public hearings here, announced it had made the decision after hearing testimony Wednesday in a closed session at Soledad Prison.

That proceeding was suspended after it was learned a prison official had been stabbed to death in another part of the facility. Authorities told the commission there was "absolutely no connection" between its proceedings and the killing.

Chairman Robert Williamson noted that the commission had asked the Reagan administration for additional evidence on its charges against CRLA regarding Miss Davis and the inmates.

"But," said Williamson, "no evidence whatsoever has been produced to support any claim of misconduct by CRLA personnel or attorneys regarding these matters..."

The commission ruling applied to allegations made in the "Uhlen Report," prepared by Lewis Uhler, director of the California Office of Economic Opportunity, that CRLA attorneys and another lawyer "intervened" at Soledad "in an attempt to arrange a visit for Angela Davis to meet with George Jackson."

Jackson is one of the Soledad Brothers, three black inmates accused of murdering a white prison guard. He is the brother of Jonathan Jackson, who died with two convicts and a superior court judge in an abortive courtroom kidnap and shooting incident last August at the Marin County Civic Center.

The state has charged Miss Davis with murder, kidnapping and conspiracy, alleging she was involved in a plot to use hostages taken in the incident as a means to free the Soledad Brothers.

The commission ruling also applied to charges by the state that CRLA attorneys had been improperly involved with another group of inmates, called the Soledad Seven.

Three of this group are now on trial for the death of another prison guard. Charges have been dropped against the remaining four.

Other allegations made by the Reagan administration concerning CRLA and other Soledad inmates will be heard at further proceedings of the commission in San Francisco on June 3.

San Jose, Calif.
The News
(Cir. D. 75,531)

MAY 21 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

2 Reagan CRLA Charges

EL CENTRO (AP)

—A federal commission has dismissed as unfounded Reagan Administration charges that California Rural Legal Assistance lawyers were "improperly" involved with black activist Angela Davis and the Soledad Brothers.

Commission Chairman Robert B. Williamson said Thursday the three-judge

panel had asked the state for more evidence on its charges against the CRLA but received none.

He said the commission specifically asked for details on allegations concerning Miss Davis and three black Soledad Prison inmates accused of killing a white guard.

"But no evidence whatsoever has been produced to support any claim of misconduct by CRLA personnel or attorneys regarding these matters," said Williamson, a retired chief justice of Maine.

A report by Lewis K. Uhler, state director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, charged CRLA attorneys

Branded 'False'

"intervened" at the prison in an effort to arrange a meeting between Miss Davis and one of the inmates.

During Thursday's proceedings the commission heard testimony from an Imperial County welfare worker who stated termination of the

CRLA program would cause bitterness among the poor.

Donna English said the CRLA was instrumental in the adoption of the Work Incentive Program to assist welfare recipients obtain training that would qualify them for jobs.

PROBERS: May 21-

CRLA Did 7-

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EL CENTRO (UPI) —A federal commission has dismissed as "totally unfounded and without merit" allegations by the Reagan Administration that attorneys for the California Rural Legal Assistance were "improperly involved" with Angela Davis and the "Soledad Brothers."

The decision was made in a closed session at Soledad prison Wednesday but was not announced until Thursday during a public hearing here.

"No evidence whatsoever has been produced to support any claim of misconduct by CRLA personnel or attorneys regarding these matters," said commission chairman Robert B. Williamson, retired chief justice of Maine.

The commission, composed of three judges, is holding hearings around the state into the
(Continued on Page 6, Col. 1)

ANGELA

(Continued from Page 1)

CRLA at the direction of the Nixon Administration after Gov. Ronald Reagan last December vetoed the federal grant funding the organization.

Thursday's announcement referred to charges contained in a report prepared by state Office of Economic Opportunity director Lewis K. Uhler. He alleged that CRLA attorneys and another lawyer "intervened" at the prison in an effort to arrange a meeting between George Jackson, one of the "Soledad brothers," and Miss Davis.

The decision also applied to charges that CRLA attorneys were involved improperly with another group of inmates known as the "Soledad Seven," three of whom are on trial for the death of a guard.

The commission will consider other allegations made by the Reagan Administration against CRLA at a hearing in San Francisco June 3.

Santa Rosa P.O.

5-21-71

Los Angeles, Calif.
Times
(Cir. D 955,915 - S 1,269,459)

MAY 21 1971

Allen & F.C.B. Est. 1958

ENCOUNTER IN HALLWAY

Judge Gets Into Struggling Match With TV Cameraman

Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer.

EL CENTRO—"Who in the hell are you?" Los Angeles television cameraman Leslie Paul Meeks cried Thursday as he struggled with a man in a hallway of the court building here.

"I'm the judge," Meeks' elderly opponent shouted back, "and I'm going to get you for contempt of court."

The pushing match between Meeks, cameraman for station KNBC, and Justice Court Judge Hugh Keating ended abruptly.

The judge, who had interrupted Meeks by grabbing a tripod and knocking over a floodlight as the latter was filming an interview, stormed into his nearby office and called Sheriff Raymond Rowe.

Moments later, the sheriff and six deputies arrived and took Meeks to jail. He was found in contempt and

ordered to pay a \$50 fine or spend 10 days in jail.

Co-workers obtained a Superior Court habeas corpus writ freeing Meeks and said the case would be appealed.

According to witnesses, the hallway encounter came while a KNBC crew was filming an interview with a witness from a hearing on a CRLA controversy.

Floodlights were lighted and film was rolling when Keating, 66, appeared. He pointed to a tripod in the middle of the hall and then to the doorway to his office on the other side.

"I've got to get into that office," he said. "Get the hell out of the way."

Meeks, not realizing the man who spoke also was the judge, said: "You can go around."

"I don't choose to go around," the judge said. The struggle followed.

San Francisco, Calif.
Examiner
(Cir. D 203,026 - Set. 159,057)

MAY 21 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

**CRLA Critic
Has Office
Firebombed**

Special to The Examiner

SALINAS — The law office of a witness who testified earlier this week, criticizing the California Rural Legal Assistance in its dealings over Cesar Chavez' lettuce boycott, was firebombed before dawn today.

A bomb tossed through a window caused damage to the office and property of attorney William Moreno estimated at \$20,000 by a fire inspector. Moreno arrived in time to salvage some of his files.

Reagan: Muzzling In CRLA Probe

SACRAMENTO (UPI) —Gov. Ronald Reagan has charged the commission appointed by the Nixon administration to investigate the California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling witnesses."

"Events of the past several days," Reagan said Wednesday in a telegram to Frank Carlucci, director of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity, "are deeply disturbing to me and should be to you."

He charged that a "firm understanding" between him, the federal OEO and the U.S. Justice Department over the commission's procedures "has been breached repeatedly in recent months."

Consisting of three out-of-state judges, the commission is conducting hearings to determine whether CRLA should continue to exist. The probe was prompted by Reagan's veto last December of CRLA's \$1.8 million federal grant.

The governor charged the agency, now operating on a temporary grant, did not really serve the needs of the poor as it was set up to do and that it violated OEO regulations.

Reagan told Carlucci he was particularly angry because the commission announced Tuesday that three of the governor's 35 specific allegations against the agency were without merit.

"I urge you to clarify immediately your instructions to the commission in such a manner as to require that its findings be filed directly with you all in the same context," he told Carlucci.

The governor said "the commission has imposed a virtual gag rule on non-CRLA witnesses, limiting their testimony only to narrow items" contained in the Reagan administration report that prompted his veto.

"It has become increasingly clear that the procedures adopted by this commission are having the effect of muzzling witnesses whose testimony would otherwise shed valuable

light on the practices and procedures which have been and are being engaged in by CRLA personnel," Reagan said.

The governor told Carlucci "the fault for the current confusing state of affairs must lie at the doorstep of federal OEO which misinformed the commission members as to their proper role in these proceedings—to investigate all of the facts pertaining to CRLA's activities."

Reagan has increasingly attacked the commission's procedures, and at his Tuesday news conference said, "very frankly I don't have too much confidence in what is going to be the outcome of the commission's findings."

A commission hearing which had started Wednesday inside Soledad State Prison was cancelled because two convicts stabbed a prison official to death.

Robert B. Williamson, commission chairman, said prison officials had told him "there is absolutely no connection between the hearing and this tragic event."

Commissioners had intended to investigate assertions that CRLA attorneys were connected to prison tensions and at least partially responsible for racial disturbances there.

Before the meeting started, a spokesman for the California Correctional Officers Association complained that the state's attorney general was "handcuffing" guards and prison officials who planned to testify.

Kenneth Brown, the organization's press officer, said the attorney general's office had prohibited guards and officials from testifying on any incident that may be pending in the courts, or on current investigations that might lead to an inquiry.

The CRLA has denied all assertions concerning its lawyers and the prison.

Commissioners will meet today and Saturday in El Centro.

San Francisco, Calif.
Examiner
(Cir. D 203,036 - Set 159,057)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888



KENNETH CONANT, ERICK HILTON AND JERRY LUND
Slain Soledad administrator (left) and suspects held in fatal knifing

—UPI Photos

Tight Security Follows Stabbing at Soledad

Special to The Examiner

SOLEDAD — Prisoners at Soledad State Prison remained locked in their cells as the investigation continued into the fatal stabbing of a prison official.

The prisoners were being taken to eat in groups of 150 in the prison's Central Facility, where Kenneth E. Conant, 49, a program administrator, was stabbed to death and two other officials were wounded.

District Attorney William Curtis interrogated staff members and inmates until late last night and resumed the investigation today.

Robbers

Two suspects — Orange County robber and jail escapee Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Los Angeles robber Erick V. Hilton, 24 — were being held in maximum security.

Curtis said inmate assault and murder charges will be filed against Lund and Hilton. He did not say whether others will be charged although he said the slaying apparently was planned.

“It appears to be an execu-

tion slaying . . . a very deliberate thing."

Assistant Prison Superintendent Chuck Stowell said no motive has been uncovered but it appeared Conant's slaying — unlike others at the troubled prison — was not racially motivated. Conant and his attackers were white.

Home-Made Knife

A knife made from a piece of steel was the death weapon.

Extra guards went on duty and 1200 prisoners were locked in their cells after the 10th violent death — four officials and six convicts — since Jan. 15, 1970. Family visits were cancelled today and outside activities were cancelled through May 31.

Conant was knifed in the back of the head as he sat at the desk where he handled programming for 600 convicts. Lt. E. D. Steele and Supervising Counselor Ed Whalen were injured slightly when they went to Conant's aid.

Services

Private funeral services were held for Conant today.

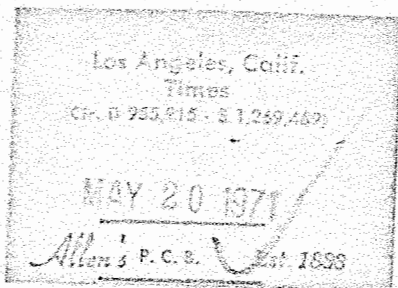
A memorial service was scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday at First Methodist Church in Salinas.

The stabbing brought an abrupt suspension of a special three-judge federal commission investigation inside the prison into charges by Governor Reagan that the California Rural Legal Assistance has engaged in improper actions at Soledad. The hearing moved on to El Centro in Imperial County today.

In Sacramento, Loren V. Smith, general manager of the California State Employers Association, said the hardened inmates at Soledad should be put in a new maximum security prison.

"The (Soledad) facility is antiquated," Smith asserted.

It was quite normal for convicts to be in the headquarters room where Conant, a 20-year veteran in penal work, dealt with such problems as rehabilitation and training. But Lund and Hilton were not on the prisoner committee meeting with Conant.



CRLA Investigators Delay Soledad Hearing

Proceedings Suspended After Slaying
of Prison Official Will Resume June 3

BY PHILIP HAGER

Times Staff Writer

SOLEDAD, Calif. — A federal commission investigating the California Rural Legal Assistance controversy heard testimony Wednesday in a closed hearing at Soledad State Prison.

The proceedings were suspended at midmorning after it was learned that a prison administrator had been killed in another part of the facility.

State officials said they had no reason to believe there was a connection between the killing and the hearings on CRLA.

The commission indicated it would conduct the remainder of the proceedings scheduled for Soledad on June 23 in San Francisco. Today's hearings will be at El Centro.

(In El Centro, an Imperial County Welfare Department official agreed Wednesday that "some restrictions" had been placed on two social workers who claim they have virtually been held prisoners at their desks during working hours. Associated Press reported.

(Mr. and Mrs. Michael English said Florence Kinlock, the welfare director, has prohibited them from making or receiving telephone calls or visiting restrooms without permission and has declined to approve leave so they can testify at the commission hearings on CRLA.

(Winifred Hutchens, assistant welfare director, said "some restrictions have been placed against the Englishes . . . But if anyone has been subpoenaed to testify at a hearing, it has been our policy to give permission and even provide transportation." Any elaboration about the restrictions would have to come from Mrs. Kinlock, she said. Mrs. Kinlock was not available for comment.

Wants to Testify

(CRLA attorneys earlier this week said Mrs. English wanted to testify on behalf of CRLA.)

The commission had agreed to private proceedings at the prison to protect corrections officers and inmates who requested anonymity. But a transcript of the testimony, with those names and possibly other identifying information deleted, will be made public, perhaps by next week.

The Reagan Administration, in a document prepared by the state Office of Economic Opportunity director, Lewis K. Uhler, had asserted that CRLA attorneys represented inmates at Soledad in violation of federal regulations.

It was those and other charges by Uhler that Reagan used as a basis for his veto of CRLA's \$1.8 million budget, which is supported by federal anti-poverty funds.

Later, in answer to an inquiry by Uhler, Raymond K. Procnier, state director of corrections, asserted that CRLA attorneys had played a "major

role" in disturbances in state prisons.

Last month, Moe Camacho, president of the California Correctional Officers Assn., said there was "reason to believe" that a series of assaults that took

place at Soledad "were motivated by or at least an outgrowth of talks with certain attorneys, many of them employed by CRLA."

Neither Procnier nor Camacho presented details of their charges and CRLA officials vigorously denied the allegations.

At Wednesday's hearing, inmates quoted in the Uhler report had completed their testimony when the killing was reported. Because guards waiting to testify had been closely associated with the dead officer, the commission decided to suspend the hearings.

Sacramento, Calif.
The Bee
(Cir. D. 172,411 Sun. 200,546)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Soledad Prison Killing Is Ninth Within 18 Months

SOLEDAD (UPI) — A Four prison employees and veteran Soledad State Prison official was stabbed to death five inmates have died in the racially tense prison 115 miles south of San Francisco Wednesday — the ninth person killed at California's troubled penitentiary in the past 18 months.

Kenneth E. Conant, 49, a program administrator, was stabbed in the back of the head with a prison-made knife and two other officials suffered minor wounds while subduing his inmate attackers.

A young white guard was killed a few days later.

The slaying of Conant apparently had no connection with the earlier racial incidents as the victim and the two inmates seized after his death were white. Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric Hilton, 29, both convicted robbers from Southern California, were held for investigation of murder.

The slaying occurred as a special federal commission was meeting in another part of the prison investigating charges that California-Rural Legal Assistance, a federally financed legal aid group had fomented violence among inmates. The hearings were indefinitely postponed after Conant's death.

Three out-of-state judges are investigating charges by the Reagan administration against CRLA, including the accusation that its attorneys were involved in the "motivation" of earlier violence at Soledad. The hearings had no apparent link to Wednesday's killing.

Two groups of black convicts — the "Soledad Brothers" and "Soledad Seven" — have been charged with the slayings of two white prison guards in the months following the deaths of the three Negro prisoners.

Conant, of Salinas, was a nonuniformed employe who directed activities, custody requirement and rehabilitation programs for inmates.

Burbank, Calif.
Daily Review
(Cir. 6XW 11,012)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Witnesses blocked

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Reagan says the federal commission investigating California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling" potential witnesses who might substantiate Reagan's charges against the controversial agency.

In a telegram to Washington, Reagan said the commission is operating under rules which have "tied its hands in such a manner that the truth cannot and will not be known without a major change in approach."

His latest criticism was in a telegram Wednesday to Frank Carlucci, director of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity which sent the panel of three out-of-state supreme court justices to probe CRLA's activities.

MAY 30 1977

CRLA Probers Muzzling Witnesses, Reagan Says

SACRAMENTO (UPI) —Gov. Ronald Reagan has charged the commission appointed by the Nixon administration to investigate the California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling witnesses."

"Events of the past several days," Reagan said Wednesday in a telegram to Frank Carlucci, director of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity, "are deeply disturbing to me and should be to you."

He charged that a "firm understanding" between him, the federal OEO and the U.S. Justice Department over the commission's procedures "has been breached repeatedly in recent months."

Consisting of three out-of-state judges, the commission is conducting hearings to determine whether CRLA should continue to exist. The probe was prompted by Reagan's veto last December of CRLA's \$1.8 million federal grant.

The governor charged the agency, now operating on a temporary grant, did not really serve the needs of the poor as it was set up to do and that it violated OEO regulations.

Reagan told Carlucci he was particularly angry because the commission announced Tuesday that three of the governor's 35 specific allegations against the agency were without merit.

"I urge you to clarify immediately your instructions to the commission in such a manner as to require that its findings be filed directly with you all in the same context," he told Carlucci.

The governor said "the commission has imposed a virtual gag rule on non-CRLA witnesses, limiting their testimony only to narrow items" contained in the Reagan administration report that prompted his veto.

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(Turn To Page A2 Col. 3)

CRLA Probers

(Continued From Page A-1)

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Robert B. Williamson, commission chairman, said prison officials had told him "there is absolutely no connection between the hearing and this tragic event."

Commissioners had intended to investigate assertions that CRLA attorneys were connected to prison tensions and at least partially responsible for racial disturbances there.

Before the meeting started, a spokesman for the California Correctional Officers Association complained that the state's attorney general was "handcuffing" guards and prison officials who planned to testify.

Kenneth Brown, the organization's press officer, said the attorney general's office had prohibited guards and officials from testifying on any incident that may be pending in the courts, or on current investigations that might lead to an inquiry.

This CRLA has denied all assertions concerning its lawyers and the prison.

Commissioners will meet today and Saturday in El Centro.

Glendale, Calif.
News Press
(Cir. 6XW 23,253)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

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SACRAMENTO — Gov. Reagan says the federal commission investigating California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling" potential witnesses who might substantiate Reagan's charges against the controversial agency.

In a telegram to Washington, Reagan said the commission is operating under rules which have "tied its hands in such a manner that the truth cannot and will not be known without a major change in approach."

His latest criticism was in a telegram Wednesday to Frank Carlucci, director of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity which sent the panel of three out-of-state supreme court justices to probe CRLA's activities.

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El Centro, Calif.
Imperial Valley Press
(Cir. D 7,831)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Reagan charges CRLA probe with 'muzzling'

SACRAMENTO (UPI) —Gov. Ronald Reagan has charged the commission appointed by the Nixon administration to investigate the California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling witnesses."

"Events of the past several days," Reagan said Wednesday in a telegram to Frank Carlucci, director of the federal

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He charged that a "firm understanding" between him, the federal OEO and the U.S. Justice Department over the commission's procedures "has been breached repeatedly in recent months."

Consisting of three out-of-state judges, the commission is

conducting hearings to determine whether CRLA should continue to exist. The probe was prompted by Reagan's veto last December of CRLA's \$1.8 million federal grant.

The governor charged the agency, now operating on a temporary grant, did not really serve the needs of the poor as it was set up to do and that it violated OEO regulations.

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Witnesses 'Muzzled' In CRLA Probe: Reagan

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Reagan wrote that "the procedures adopted by this commission are having the effect of muzzling witnesses whose testimony would otherwise shed valuable light on the practices and proceedings" of CRLA.

"The commission has imposed a virtual gag rule on non-CRLA witnesses, limiting their testimony only to narrow items in the state OEO report on CRLA," Reagan continued. "Any new information — however pertinent — is being ruled out of order."

Reagan referred to the 283-page report submitted to back up his veto last December of a 1.83-million-dollar federal grant to run CRLA this year. Carlucci authorized a temporary grant while the panel investigates whether CRLA is not doing its proper job representing the California's rural poor as Reagan has charged.

The governor also told Carlucci "your instructions to the

... commission apparently have allowed them to publicly announce their findings piecemeal each day, instead of in a report to you."

He urged Carlucci "to clarify immediately your instructions to the commission in such a manner that its findings be filed directly with you, all in the same context, and that the commission members avail themselves of all offered evidence or testimony, even if it proves CRLA is not providing legal services to the poor."

BLAMES OEO

He added that "I regret to say that most of the fault for the current confusing state of affairs must lie at the doorstep of federal OEO."

Reagan said the commission has refused to allow cross-examination of pro-CRLA witnesses and has failed to give adequate notice to other persons who wished to testify.

"Thus far this week," he said, "a number of witnesses desiring to testify to their knowledge of CRLA's activities have simply given up in frustration after being exposed to the way in which the hearings are being conducted."

He noted one former CRLA employe who wanted to testify "became so disgusted after having observed firsthand 'the commission's biased limitations on testimony' that she refused to subject herself to the 'personal aggravations, harrassment and frustrations of such a sham'."

Reagan said "she is the same woman who was subjected to pressure by the CRLA attorney, Robert Gnaizda, several months ago — in four separate telephone calls in one evening — to change her story about CRLA's improper activities."

Oakland, Calif.
Tribune
(Cir. D 225,033, Sat. 209,931,
Sun. 251,534)

MAY 30 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

CRLA Gets Boost From Welfare Aide

EL CENTRO (AP) — A social worker who claimed her supervisors tried to keep her from testifying told a public hearing today that the poor need and like the California Rural Legal Assistance program.

The witness, Donna English, said a decision to end the program "would cause bitterness among the poverty group."

With her husband, also an Imperial County welfare employee, Mrs. English has publicly accused their superiors of trying to keep them from testifying.

The two-day hearing was opened by a federal commission investigating CRLA after Gov. Ronald Reagan charged in Sacramento that potential witnesses who might substantiate his stand were being "muzzled."

Oakland, Calif.
Tribune
(Cir. D 225,032, Sect. 209,931,
Sun. 251,534)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Expansion of School Lunches on Agenda

RICHMOND — A PTA conference dedicated to help improve and expand school lunch programs will be held Monday at the Memorial Youth Center here.

Speaker will be State Sen. George Moscone, D-San Francisco.

The conference is sponsored by the Richmond Elementary Council with PTA districts from Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano counties.

The panel will consist of James Hemphill, chief of Food Service Bureau, State Dept. of Instruction; Robert

Gnaizda, deputy director of California Rural Legal Assistance; and Mrs. Barbara Henry, president of Welfare Rights Organization of Richmond.

Among the seven discussion groups during the day-long conference will be those on funding, preparation, distribution, nutrition education and personnel training for school lunch programs.

The conference stems from an announcement last February by state superintendent of public instruction, Wilson Riles calling for expansion of the lunch program.

San Jose, Calif.
The News
(Cir. D. 75,337)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Reagan Says CRLA Probe Witnesses 'Muzzled'

By KIETH HEARN

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and that the commission members avail themselves of all offered evidence or testimony, even if it proves CRLA is not providing legal services to the poor."

He added that "I regret to say that most of the fault for the current confusing state of

affairs must lie at the doorstep of federal OEO."

Reagan said the commission has refused to allow cross-examination of pro-CRLA witnesses and has failed to give adequate notice to other persons who wished to testify.

"Thus far this week," he said, "a number of witnesses desiring to testify to their knowledge of CRLA's activities have simply given up in frustration after being exposed to the way in which the hearings are being conducted."

MAY 20 1971

More Violence

A Fatal Knifing At Soledad-- 2 Cons Accused

Page 1

From Our Correspondent

Soledad

Kenneth E. Conant, 49, a program administrator at Soledad prison, was stabbed to death yesterday, and two other officials were wounded while subduing his alleged inmate attackers.

The killing—fourth murder of a Soledad prison employee since Jan. 13, 1970 — occurred while a Federal investigating panel was holding meetings in another part of the prison on the alleged role of California Rural Legal Assistance in prison violence.

Two inmates, Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric Hilton, 29, both convicted Southern California robbers, were held for investigation of murder.

ATTACK

Assistant Superintendent Chuck Stowell, who was in charge of some 600 men in four wings of the prison, was seated at his desk about 9:30 a.m. preparing to conduct a routine disciplinary committee hearing involving several inmates.

Stowell said Lund and Hilton, neither of whom were scheduled to appear before the committee, wordlessly walked in to the room.

Conant was fatally stabbed in the back of the head. Lieutenant E. D. Steele and supervising counsellor Ed Whelan were also in the room at the time, and both suffered minor injuries in grappling with the two alleged assailants.

Investigators from the Monterey county district attorney's office, already at the troubled institution on another matter, arrived moments after the stabbing and took a piece of steel honed into a prison knife or "shank" as evidence.

The Federal committee investigating the CRLA had convened at 7 a.m. in another part of the prison, but adjourned an hour after the stabbing and postponed its



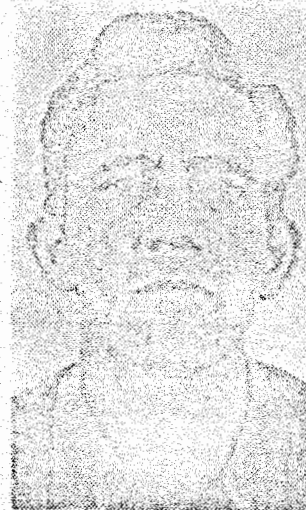
AP Wirephotos

KENNETH E. CONANT
The victim



AP Wirephoto

ERIC HILTON
Los Angeles robber



AP Wirephoto

JERRY W. LUND
Imprisoned since 1967

Soledad Slaying-- Official Stabbed

From Page 1

hearings at the prison to an indefinite date.

The 1200 inmates in Soledad's Central Facility were immediately locked in their cells pending an investigation.

Conant was a 20-year veteran in correctional work. He is survived by his wife and a son at the family's home in Salinas.

Program administrators in State prisons and non-uniformed employees who direct activities, custody requirements and rehabilitation programs for inmates in their charge.

WHITE

Although previous incidents at the prison have had a racial overtone thought to stem from the killing of three black inmates by a white officer in January, 1970, in this case both Conant and his alleged assailants were white.

Lund was sentenced to prison in 1967 from Orange county on a first degree robbery charge with added time for an escape from the Los Angeles County Jail.

Hilton entered Soledad in 1967 on a conviction of first degree robbery in Los Angeles county.

In Sacramento, the California State Employees Association promptly called for "immediate steps to prevent further tragedies" at Soledad.

CALL

Loren V. Smith, the association's general manager, called for improvements in security at the prison officially known as the Correctional Training Facility.

The Federal hearing at the prison yesterday had been expected to center on charges by the California Correctional Officers Association that CRLA attorneys had some role in inspiring inmates to a series of violent incidents in the last year and a half that have seen four

employees and six inmates killed and many others injured.

Yesterday's attack, however, came at a time when Soledad's often-criticized Central Facility was undergoing a major easing of strict security.

The iron-tight "X" wing adjustment center, scene of several violent attacks, was drained of inmates in March and closed. Its counterpart "O" wing, which made the other half of Soledad's notorious "hole," was also slowly being emptied of inmates sent there for disciplinary reasons.

TRANSFER

Many inmates have been transferred from the restricted inside corridor of Soledad Central to the more spacious and relaxed North Facility at the prison.

Yesterday's incident, however, was expected to bring a flurry of new calls for a tougher institution.

Almost before complete details of the incident were known yesterday, Smith dispatched two of his top aides from the employees association to discuss with corrections officials the possibility of Otey Mesa Prison in San Diego county.

The project was once planned to replace San Quentin Prison, but was scrapped for financial reason.

"For the kind of hardened inmate Soledad in called upon to handle, the facility is antiquated," Smith charged yesterday.

Funeral services for Conant were pending yesterday at Terry's Mortuary in the town of Soledad.

San Francisco, Calif.
Chronicle
(Cir. D 478,704 - Set. 443,305)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Guard Slain

CRLA Hearing at Soledad Canceled

By George Murphy
Chronicle Correspondent

Soledad

A Federal commission investigating charges that the California Rural Legal Assistance program fomented disturbances at the Soledad Correctional Training Facility here was abruptly halted yesterday after a prison official was murdered.

Commission chairman Robert B. Williamson said later prison officials had told him "there was absolutely no connection between the hearing and this tragic event."

Williamson said that when word of the murder reached the hearing room, representatives of the California Correctional Officers Association told the commission that guards, scheduled to testify, were "deeply affected by the tragic loss of a friend," and asked that the hearing be postponed.

"This, of course, was done," Williamson said, adding that the Soledad question will be considered at a hearing to be held June 3 in San Francisco.

Attorney representing CRLA issued a statement of "deepest condolences" to the widow and family of slain prison administrator Kenneth Conant.

"We understand how all personnel at the Soledad facility are personally affected; therefore we have concurred in the request (of the correctional officers) that the hearings . . . be continued to a later date."

The commission left last night for El Centro, where it will hold hearings today and tomorrow.

The three-member, Nixon administration-appointed commission will split up on June 1 and 2.

One commissioner each will preside over hearings at Santa Maria, Madera and Marysville on June 1. On the following day, simultaneous hearings will be held in Modesto, Gilroy and Santa Rosa.

On June 3 and 4 the full commission will meet in San Francisco.

The commission is investigating Reagan administra-

tion charges against CRLA which led to the governor's veto last January of \$1.8 million in Federal funds for the legal aid organization.

Reagan, a frequent critic of the Federal commission since its probe began, fired off a new telegram to Federal OEO Director Frank Carlucci yesterday, saying he was "deeply disturbed" by the commission's conduct.

San Jose, Calif.
The News
(Cir. D. 75,531)

MAY 20, 1977
Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888



Art Buchwald

Reagan Proper Client For CRLA

No matter how I try, I can't stop worrying about Gov. Ronald Reagan's personal financial situation. As everyone knows by now, Gov. Reagan had such bad financial reverses last year that he didn't have to pay state income taxes.

Instead of Californians sympathizing with him over these financial reverses, they became upset and felt there was something wrong because they had to pay taxes and Reagan didn't.

Very few people in the state said, "If the governor makes \$44,000 a year as salary and has assets of around \$1 million and still can't pay his state income taxes, then he must be hurting very badly, and needs pity rather than censure."

My first thought was that the governor should seek legal aid from the local Office of Economic Opportunity. Although Reagan is trying to abolish legal aid for the poor in California, I'm sure the poverty lawyers would take his case anyway, just to prove that they will take anybody in dire financial straits, regardless of race, creed or elective office.

To make sure, I telephoned a CRLA (California Rural Legal Assistance) lawyer in California and asked him if he would take Reagan as a client.

"Yes," he said, "he would qualify for free legal aid. Our charter specifically says that any governor of a state whose finances are in such poor shape that he doesn't have to pay personal state income taxes is in no position to pay a lawyer, and is therefore eligible for free legal advice. It would be our pleasure to help Gov. Reagan in anyway we could."

"How would you go about it?"

"From a legal standpoint it would probably be the most interesting case we've ever handled. Most of our cases have had to do with people who didn't pay any state income taxes because they didn't make any money. This would be

the first time we represented someone who made money but didn't pay income taxes.

"Surely there is something wrong with the system if the governor of the largest state in the union has been hurt so badly financially that he can't pay any taxes."

"But what legal defense would you have for him?" I asked.

"First, we would have to find out what financial reverses Mr. Reagan had, whether they came from cattle, oil, real estate or the stock market. Then we would prove that it wasn't his fault that his investments went sour. It was probably due to the general economy."

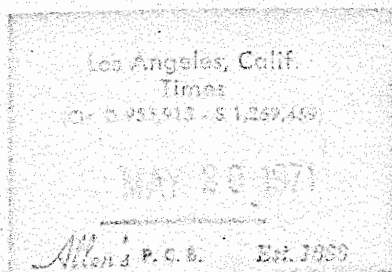
"But the Republicans are in charge of the economy right now. Wouldn't it look bad if Reagan blamed his own party for the fact he had such a bad income situation."

"I guess you're right. We'll have to think of something else. Perhaps we could persuade the courts to allow the governor to make one motion picture a year."

"Or a new Death Valley Days series," I suggested.

"I was thinking of a remake of the 'Grapes of Wrath,'" the lawyer said. "They could shoot most of it around Sacramento, so the governor wouldn't have to be on location too long. But the important thing is to get him healthy financially so he doesn't have to eat from the public trough."

"This thing has far more ramifications than anyone wants to admit," he said. "We're trying to pull the poor up by their bootstraps so they become honest, hard-working citizens. But if they see somebody like Gov. Reagan, who has worked all his life and still has nothing left over for income taxes, they're going to say to themselves: 'The hell with it. Let's stay on welfare.'"



Reagan Income Tax Proves You Just Can't Get Ahead

BY ART BUCHWALD

WASHINGTON—No matter how I try, I can't stop worrying about Gov. Ronald Reagan's personal financial situation. As everyone knows by now, Gov. Reagan had such bad financial reverses last year that he didn't have to pay state income taxes.

Instead of Californians sympathizing with him over these financial reverses, they became upset and felt there was something wrong because they had to pay taxes and Reagan didn't.

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"If you have any business sense, you'll save all your welfare checks for a rainy day."

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San Francisco, Calif.
Examiner
(Cir. D 223,024 - Sec. 152,037)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P.C.E. Ed. 1883

Panel Drops Three CRLA

Charges Page 1

By Joel Tiumak
Examiner News Staff

EL CENTRO — Three more of Governor Reagan's charges against California Rural Legal Assistance were dismissed today by a panel appointed by the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington.

The OEO commission called the allegations "totally unfounded and without merit."

Two of the charges were that CRLA was linked to Soledad Prison incidents in which: Officer William C. Shull was slain in July 1970, leading to charges against seven inmates; and in which Guard John V. Mills was slain in January 1970, leading to charges of murder against the so-called Soledad Three — George L. Jackson, John W. Clutchette and Fleeta Drumgo.

A third dismissed charge was that CRLA attorneys attempted to arrange a meeting between Angela Davis and Jackson at Soledad prior to the Marin County shootout

— Turn to Page 3, Col. 4

Threats In Probe Of CRLA

—From Page 1

officials will get a chance to testify on CRLA activities within Soledad Prison on June 3, when the hearings resume in San Francisco.

That portion of the hearings will be closed to the public and the press, although testimony of the guards, prison officials and the inmates will eventually be made public with names and identifications withheld.

The hearings here, near the Mexican border, will end the commission's second week of inquiries into Gov. Reagan's charges against CRLA. Reagan vetoed CRLA's \$1.8 million grant on the grounds it engaged in illegal activities throughout the state and didn't properly serve the poor.

The Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington appointed the special commission to check into the Governor's charges and recommend whether to uphold or override Reagan's veto.

Here in the Imperial Valley, CRLA faces its biggest test. The young, urbane poverty lawyers aiding Chicano farm workers are looked upon as intruders by growers and county and city officials.

One witness against CRLA, attorney F. Douglas McDaniel, is reported to be under police surveillance because he received threatening phone calls this past week.

Sacramento, Calif.
The Bee
(Cir. D. 172,411 Sun. 200,545)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Reagan Claims Gagged CRLA Probe Witnesses

Gov. Ronald Reagan is complaining that the federal inquiry commission on California Rural Legal Assistance has imposed "a virtual gag rule" on witnesses critical of the antipoverty law agency.

"The procedures adopted by this commission are having the effect of muzzling witnesses whose testimony would otherwise shed valuable light on the practices and procedures which have been and are being engaged in by CRLA personnel," declared the governor.

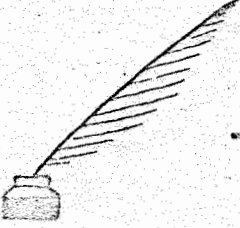
Reagan voiced his criticism yesterday in a lengthy and sharply worded telegram to Frank Carlucci, director of the US Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Carlucci appointed the three-judge panel which is hearing the Reagan administration's complaints

against CRLA.

"A number of private attorneys have stepped forward to present witnesses and other evidence," Reagan told the Washington official. "They have requested the opportunity to cross-examine CRLA's witnesses, but the commission has steadfastly refused their requests.

"Moreover, the commission has imposed a virtual gag rule on non-CRLA witnesses, limiting their testimony only to narrow items in the State OEO report. Any new information—however pertinent—is being ruled out of order."

Reagan apparently was referring to the April 27 commission ruling that any witness not mentioned in the critical State OEO report must file a request to testify by a May 12 deadline if he wished to appear.



Letter To The Editor

Mr. Editor:

Many of us in San Benito County are in favor of CRLA being re-funded.

No question about it, they have been very effective in stemming the rise of racial

discrimination in the field of employment, housing, welfare and in many other areas affecting the lives of the poor.

But when they start to tell you how to vote, and that you should not associate or talk to your Congressman because he is Republican, then I say it is time to impose limitations.

Take the local Consumers Co-op as an example.

It is completely under the dominance of the Gilroy office of CRLA and its staff.

It has been used as a front for the milk program, the hot lunch program, the lawsuit against HRD, and now for a free clinic.

This is a duplication of existing services and therefore a waste of money and energy.

I have been told by several school administrators that milk has been available for any child upon request.

I've also been told that there will be "hot lunch" facilities in the new school and this was long before CRLA induced Consumers personnel to campaign for hot lunches.

Local HRD personnel have always been willing to discuss problems openly with anyone and while not easy to get along with personally, have gone out of their way to solve said problems. Discriminatory? No!

As for the free clinic, there already is a free clinic for migrants at the local Health Department every Wednesday, and as every poverty project has always been migrant oriented, I wonder about this free clinic.

If you and all you concerned citizens look around carefully, you will find that the only ones who benefit from your tax money are outsiders and that very little of that tax money is staying in our community.

But CRLA goes on, in the name of the Consumers Co-op and no one dares to speak out because they are all powerful in our courts.

Well, I've stuck my neck out, let's see who wants to chop it off.

To CRLA I would say, your actions and attitude call for limitations to be placed on your organizations.

John Hernandez

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2-Day CRLA Hearing Opens

EL CENTRO (AP) — The federal commission investigating state charges against the California Rural Legal Assistance began a two-day hearing here today.

The commission will consider charges that El Centro office personnel took an active part in the strike activities of Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and that it transported students from nearby Brawley to the Imperial County Courthouse to take part in a demonstration by union members.

Los Angeles, Calif.
Herald Examiner
(Cir. D 519,391)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Soledad Official Slain; Charge Two Convicts

SOLEDAD, Calif. (UPI)—An administrator was stabbed to death at Soledad State Prison Wednesday while a special commission was in the penitentiary investigating charges that a federally funded anti-poverty legal society had fomented violence among inmates.

Kenneth E. Conant, 49, prison program administrator, was killed by two prisoners who attacked him with a knife at his desk.

The commission hearing was adjourned after the slaying, which was the ninth at Soledad in less than 18 months.

The killing apparently had no connection with the scheduled hearings into charges that the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) was involved in the "motivation" of earlier violence at the prison.

The attack on Conant did not appear to have the racial overtones of previous slayings that started with the killing of three black inmates by a white guard in January, 1970.

Two prison employees suffered minor injuries while subduing Conant's assailants, who were identified as Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric Hilton, 24.

Shortly after the killings began in 1970 a white guard was stabbed fatally, and three black inmates, now known as the "Soledad Brothers," were



ERIC HILTON



UPI Telephotos

JERRY LUND

charged with murder. The brother of George Jackson, one of the "Soledad Brothers," was killed, along with two San Quentin convicts and a judge, last Aug. 7 in a shootout at the Marin County Court in San Rafael, Calif.

The state, which contends the Marin County episode was aimed at freeing the "Soledad Brothers," has charged Angela Davis, former UCLA instructor and an avowed Communist, with taking part in the plot. She is awaiting trial in San Rafael.

The investigative commission at the prison when Conant was killed Wednesday is composed of retired Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice George R. Currie, retired Maine Chief Justice Robert B. Williamson, and Colorado Supreme Court Justice Robert B. Lee.



UPI Telephoto

KENNETH CONANT
Prison victim

Aide Slain At Desk In Soledad

SOLEDAD (UPI) — An administrator was stabbed to death at Soledad State Prison Wednesday while a special commission was inside the walls probing charges that a federally funded anti-poverty legal society had fomented violence among inmates.

The commission adjourned its hearings after Kenneth E. Conant, 49, prison program administrator, was fatally stabbed at his desk in the institution about 9:30 a.m.

Two other prison employees in the room subdued the attackers, identified as inmates Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric Hilton, 24. The victim and his assailants were white.

Conant's slaying — the ninth at Soledad in the last two years — had no apparent connection with the hearings into charges by some prison guards that the California Rural Legal Assistance was involved in the "motivation" of previous violence at the prison.

Los Angeles, Calif.
Herald Examiner
(Cir. D. 519,221)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. E. Est. 1888

CRLA Witnesses 'Muzzled'—Reagan

SACRAMENTO (AP)—Gov. Reagan has complained to Washington that a federal commission probing California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling" witnesses who might back up Reagan's charges against CRLA.

The commission has adopted procedures which have "tied its hands in such a manner that the truth cannot and will not be known, without a major change in approach," Reagan said in a telegram sent yesterday to Frank Carlucci, director of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity.

The governor wrote that "it has become increasingly clear that the procedures adopted by this commission are having the effect of muzzling witnesses whose testimony would otherwise shed valuable light on the practices and procedures which have been and are being engaged in by CRLA personnel."

Reagan also wrote Carlucci that "your instructions to the CRLA investigating commission apparently have allowed them to publicly announce their find-

ings piecemeal each day, instead of in a report to you . . .

"I urge you to clarify immediately your instructions to the commission in such a manner as to require that its findings be filed directly with you, all in the same context, and that the commission members avail themselves of all offered evidence or testimony, even if it proves CRLA is not providing legal services to the poor."

The panel of three out-of-state supreme court justices is probing the federally-funded legal aid agency for the rural poor, now operating on a temporary federal grant.

Reagan in December vetoed CRLA's \$1.83 million full-year grant, contending the agency violated numerous federal guidelines and did not concern itself with the needs of individual poor people.

San Diego, Calif.
Union
(Cir. D 143,337 • S 252,550)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

2 Felons Kill Prison Counselor At Soledad

SOLEDAD (UPI) — An administrator was stabbed to death by two felons at Soledad State Prison yesterday while a special commission was inside the walls probing charges that a federally funded anti-poverty legal society had fomented violence among inmates.

The commission adjourned its hearings after Kenneth E. Conant, 49, prison program administrator, was killed in another part of the institution about 9:30 a.m. All prisoners were locked in their cells.

Conant's slaying — the ninth at Soledad in two years — had no apparent connection with the hearings into charges by some prison guards that the Cali-

fornia Rural Legal Assistance was involved in the "motivation" of previous violence at the prison.

The attack yesterday did not have the racial overtones of previous killings, which were touched off by the slaying of three Negro inmates by a white guard in January, 1970. Three white prison employees had been killed previously.

Soledad officials said Conant was attacked at his desk. Two other prison employees, E. E. Steele and Supervisor counselor Ed Whalen, suffered minor injuries while subduing the attackers, identified as Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric V. Hilton, 24. They, like Conant, are white.

Sacramento, Calif.
The Bee
(Cir. D. 172,411 Sun. 200,546)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's F.C.B. Est. 1883

2-Day CRLA Hearing Opens

EL CENTRO (AP) — The federal commission investigating state charges against the California Rural Legal Assistance began a two-day hearing here today.

The commission will consider charges that El Centro office personnel took an active part in the strike activities of Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and that it transported students from nearby Brawley to the Imperial County Courthouse to take part in a demonstration by union members.

Oakland, Calif.
Tribune
(Cir. D 225,033, Sat. 207,931,
Sun. 251,334)

MAY 20 1971

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Improved Soledad Security Proposed

SOLEDAD — The California State Employees Association has called for "immediate steps to prevent further tragedies" at the Correctional Training Facility prison here following the killing of a non-uniformed prison program administrator yesterday.

Kenneth E. Conant, 49, a 20-year career penologist, died at his desk yesterday after being stabbed above the left ear with a prison-made knife.

Prison authorities identified two suspects held in his death as Jerry Lund, 28, and Eric Hilton, 24, both serving sentences of five years to life for robbery.

Conant was the fourth prison employee slain since January, 1970.

Although previous attacks at the state's maximum security prison have had racial overtones, the victim and suspects yesterday were all white.

Conant was slain while at a desk preparing to conduct a routine disciplinary committee hearing.

Two other prison employees in the room at the time, Lt. E. D. Steele and supervising counselor Ed Whelan, were slightly injured in grappling with the suspect.

Immediately following word of the attack, Loren V. Smith, general manager of the California State Employees Association, called for improved security at the trouble-plagued prison and asked that plans to build a new maximum security prison be revived.

"Security improvements were needed at Soledad before the first murders took place," Smith said.

The slaying took place while, in another part of the prison, a special federal commission was investigating Reagan Administration charges that the federally-

financed California Rural Legal Assistance aid group, had fomented previous violence among inmates.

The hearing, which had no apparent link with Conant's slaying, was indefinitely postponed.

San Jose, Calif.
Mercury
(Cir. D. 125,332)

NOV 20 1971

Cons Slay

Soledad Official



ERIC HILTON
... Named as suspect



JERRY W. LUND
... Held in stabbing



KENNETH CONANT
... Slain official

Prison Lockup ^{Page 1} Ordered

Tenth Killing In 16 Months

By MAC BOWE
Mercury Staff Writer

SOLEDAD — A high ranking prison official was stabbed to death and two others were injured Wednesday when they were attacked by two convicts at Soledad State Prison.

The attack occurred about 9:30 a.m. just as a special commission to hear testimony about activities of the California Rural Legal Assistance had convened elsewhere in the prison.



The commission canceled hearings, which will be rescheduled later.

Dead is Kenneth E. Conant, 49, a program administrator who, with several others of equal positions, ranks just under the job of associate superintendent.

The slaying is the tenth since Jan. 13, 1970, including three guards and six convicts.

Injured slightly while capturing the two convict suspects Wednesday were Lt. E. D. Settle, a prison guard officer, and supervising counselor Edward Whalen.

Chuck Stowell, assistant to the superintendent, named convicts Jerry W. Lund, 23, and Eric Hilton, 24, as suspects in the slaying.

Stowell said Conant, Steele and Whalen were in his office preparing for a committee meeting between officials and convict representatives when the two convicts burst in the door.

"Conant was stabbed with a prison-made weapon, a piece of rolled steel," Stowell said. He would not say who stabbed Conant.

"Whalen and Steele suffered minor injuries subduing the suspects," Stowell said.

Conant was stabbed once

(Back of Section, Col. 1)

Soledad Official Slain

(Continued from Page 1)

in the hand and once in the neck according to the Monterey County Coroner's office.

Neither Stowell nor Monterey County Dist. Atty. William Curtis would comment on possible motives for the attack and killing.

In Sacramento, Gov. Ronald Reagan described the slaying as "brutal and wanton" as he spoke to state women's and men's clubs.

Stowell said all 1,200 men of the Central Facility, scene of the murder, had been locked up.

"Normal activities have been suspended," he said.

The North Facility, which houses another 1,000 men, is operating without incident, however, Stowell said.

Conant, who has been at Soledad for the past 10 years, was sort of a "junior warden," according to Stowell.

"He was in charge of Unit 1 in Central Facility, which is composed of Wings D, E, F and G, and houses about 600 men."

Both Lund and Hilton have been in Soledad Prison for less than five months, according to Stowell. Both, however, had been serving sentences elsewhere in the state.

Lund was committed in 1967 from Orange County on a first degree robbery conviction.

Later he escaped from Los Angeles County Jail where he was being housed for court proceedings in another matter.

When recaptured, he also was convicted of second degree burglary, first degree robbery and escape.

Hilton was committed in 1967 from Los Angeles County after his conviction for first degree robbery.

Stowell said Conant was sitting at his desk at the time of the attack but would not describe details.

Conant was a 20-year veteran of the California Department of Corrections, starting his career as a parole officer.

The fatal stabbing is the second this year.

On March 3 guard Robert McCarthey, 43, was stabbed by a convict and died the following day.

The trial of three Soledad inmates in the fatal stabbing of one of the three slain Soledad guards is now under way in Salinas. On trial are Jesse Phillips, James Wagner and Roosevelt Williams, accused of killing guard William Shull last July 23.

Funeral services for Conant, who lived at 427 La Mesa Dr. in Salinas, are pending at Muller Mortuary, also in Salinas.

He is survived by his widow, the former Helen Stevenson, who once lived in San Jose, and a son.

Los Angeles, Calif.
Times
Ch. D-955,915 - \$1,267,469

MAY 23 1971

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1933

LOS ANGELES TIMES

MAY 23, 1971

Soledad Prison Official Slain; 2 Convicts Held

Administrator Knifed as He Sits at Desk; Motive Not Learned

Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer

SALINAS—A high official at Soledad Prison was fatally stabbed Wednesday when he was attacked in his office by two inmates armed with a homemade knife, authorities reported.

Kenneth E. Conant, 49, a program administrator and 20-year veteran of the State Department of Corrections, died in the prison hospital after a doctor tried for 28 minutes to revive him.

The victim, who had been sitting at his desk in his office when the unprovoked attack occurred, sustained a stab wound above the left ear.

A motive for the stabbing was not immediately learned.

Lt. E. D. Steele and Ed Whalen, a supervising counselor, were present when Conant was stabbed shortly before a 9:30 a.m. committee meeting with inmates was to begin.

They were slightly injured in subduing the two suspects, Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric V. Hilton, 24, both imprisoned since 1967 for robbery in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

Frequent Racial Clashes

Soledad Prison, located 20 miles south of Salinas, has been the scene of frequent racial clashes over the last 18 months, but the victim of Wednesday's stabbing was white, as are the suspects.

At the time of the attack, a hearing by a special federal commission conducting an inquiry into the California Rural Legal Assistance system was under way at the prison. It was halted and is to be rescheduled later.

An investigator from the Monterey County district attorney's office was at the prison on another matter Wednesday morning and was summoned to the scene of the stabbing within minutes. The suspects were immediately taken to O Wing, the maximum security adjustment center.

Conant was in charge of a four-wing housing unit in the central facility, supervising about 600 of Soledad's approximately 2,900 inmates. He was No. 4 in the administrative chain of command.

A spokesman for the Department of Corrections in Sacramento said Conant was the first high ranking official in the prison system killed by inmates in recent years.

Lived in Housing Unit

Conant, a graduate of the University of Denver who did postgraduate work at USC, was preparing to attend a disciplinary and classification committee meeting. However, prison spokesmen said that although the suspects lived in Conant's housing unit, they were not scheduled to face any disciplinary proceedings.

Conant was the fourth member of the Soledad staff killed in the last 16 months. In addition, four black and two white inmates have died in the same period.

Lund was first sent to Soledad in 1967 for first-degree robbery in Orange County. He later escaped from the Los Angeles County Jail while he was in litigation on another charge.

After Lund's recapture, he was convicted of second-degree burglary and first-degree robbery. In 1963, he was convicted of escape.

Hilton was sentenced from Los Angeles County in 1967 for first-degree robbery.

Los Angeles, Calif.
Times
(Cl. D 935,915 - \$ 1,287,437)

MAY 20 1971

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Reagan Raps Handling of CRLA Probe

SACRAMENTO (UPI)—Gov. Reagan fired off a telegram to the Nixon Administration Wednesday complaining that the commission it appointed to investigate California Rural Legal Assistance is "muzzling witnesses" and not obtaining the facts.

In a wire to Frank Carlucci, director of the Federal Office of Economic Opportunity, Reagan said "events of the past several days . . . are deeply disturbing to me and should be to you."

The governor charged that a "firm understanding" between him, the federal OEO and the U.S. Justice Department over how the commission's hearings would be conducted "has been breached repeatedly in recent months."

Reagan told Carlucci he was particularly irked because the commission publicly announced on Tuesday that three of the governor's 35 specific allegations against CRLA were without merit.

Oakland, Calif.
Tribune
(Cir. D 225,033, Sat. 209,931,
Sun. 251,534)

MAY 19 1971

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1898

Another Slaying at Soledad

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SOLEDAD (AP) — Kenneth E. Conant, 49, program administrator at Soledad Prison, was stabbed to death today and two other prison employees suffered minor injuries in subduing his two convict attackers, officials said.

He was the fourth prison employee stabbed to death since Jan. 13, 1970.

Chuck Stowell, assistant superintendent, said Jerry W. Lund, 28, and Eric V. Hilton, 24, both Los Angeles robbers imprisoned since 1967, were held and a prison-made knife was recovered.

Lt. E. D. Steele and supervising counsellor Ed Whalen were slightly hurt in overpowering the convicts.

While racial problems were involved in most previous incidents, prison officials said the principals in this case were Caucasian.

The stabbing took place at 9:30 a.m. as Conant sat at a desk in the prison's central facility, preparing to preside at committee meetings with prisoners.

Steele and Whalen were in the room.

An investigator for the Monterey County district attorney was in the prison on another matter and reached the scene within moments.

A special federal commission investigating Governor Reagan's charges against the California Rural Legal Assistance had scheduled closed hearings in the prison today but postponed them to an unspecified future date.

In Sacramento, the California State Employees Association called for "immediate steps to prevent further tragedies," including revival of plans to build a new maximum security prison.

Loren V. Smith, CSEA general manager, dispatched two top aides to discuss with State Department of Corrections officials the possibility of building the Otey Mesa Prison in San Diego County. The project was once planned to replace San Quentin Prison, but was scrapped for financial reasons.

"Security improvements were needed at Soledad before the first murders took place," Smith said. "It should be obvious by now that the actions were insufficient."

"For the kind of hardened inmate Soledad is called upon to handle, the facility is antiquated," he added.

Both Sides Angry

New CRLA Probe Charges

Associated Press

Governor Reagan said Tuesday critics of California Rural Legal Assistance Inc. have been "restricted" in hearings of a blue-ribbon panel appointed by the Nixon administration to investigate CRLA.

The Republican governor renewed his attack on the three-judge panel at his weekly news conference, complaining the judges had shown "an unwillingness to allow or hear testimony that might be detrimental to CRLA's activities."

At the same time, the head of the Assembly Labor Relations Committee said he will demand a state investigation into "intimidation" of two welfare workers named as potential witnesses in CRLA hearings.

"I AM PERSONALLY outraged by the clearly arbitrary action of the director of the Imperial County Department of Welfare in respect to Donna and Michael English," Assemblyman David A. Roberti, D-Los Angeles, told a news conference.

The man and wife say they have been ordered to remain in the county welfare building during working hours, forbidden to use the telephone and restrooms without permission and barred from meeting together or with welfare recipients whose cases they've been handling.

In Salinas, a woman who was to have been a key witness in Reagan's fight declined to testify before a special federal

commission Tuesday, charging the commission with bias in favor of the CRLA.

AMELIA HARRIS of Salinas, a former CRLA secretary who was to have testified in support of the governor's veto of CRLA federal funds, sent a telegram, saying, "Having observed the commission's biased limitations on testimony, I find that the commission is not interested in learning the whole truth but is merely going through the motions."

Reagan said he believes President Nixon is committed to finding a new system of legal help for the poor to replace CRLA no matter how the panel rules.

Reagan also said Democrats who claim he could have put most of his present welfare reform into effect four years ago when he first took office are "misinformed."

"Yes, if we had known four years ago

what we know now, and if we had the information we have now, we could have gone ahead," Reagan said.

ON OTHER matters, Reagan said:

✓ Democrats' \$2-billion tax reform passed by an Assembly committee Monday is still unacceptable to him because it has half a billion dollars of tax increases hidden. He said the plan was also unsound because it has no spending limits on local government and added he still might introduce his own tax reform plan this year.

✓ Coastline conservation must start on the local level with the state playing some part, but not with a total veto.

✓ University of California regents "no doubt" will do something about a Berkeley campus student newspaper editorial supporting last weekend's second anniversary demonstration at People's Park in Berkeley.

Metro Page

The Sacramento Union

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