

"Faithful 21" Hard Hit**REAGANOMICS CAUSING MASSIVE CETA LAYOFF**

By Ed Brown

Reaganomics has taken a toll of a number of "faithful long-termers" who were employed in the Employment Security system — a contractual arrangement originally with the Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) and now with CETA.

21 faithful employees from Southern Nevada, who have amassed about 175 years of service, have received their severance letters.

Some of them were relieved from duty near mid-August and others were given a final date of September 10.

Among those who received severance letters are: Evelyn Coleman, Nidia Ramos, Busena Escobar, Betty Jackson Brown, Harry Bird, Gloria Rome, Louise Dancy, Will Watson, Justus Alston, D.C. Lucas, Roosevelt Lee, Leon Smith, Bennie Gantt, Etta Jackson, Myron Thorn, Maria Rataczak, Mary Coyne, Martha Torres, Judy Graper, Marge Dodge and Charles Strickland.

"Most of us are CETA staff," said Gloria Rome, a CETA counselor. "I think about the shortest form of longevity in our staff in approximately 7 years and the longest going on 14 years."

Rome stated that Evelyn Coleman, Betty Jackson Brown, Justus Alston and herself were originally hired as advisors, with Coleman and Rome hired at the advent of CEP around 1968.

Youth Arrested In Dunes Case

A 17 year old youth was arrested last Thursday morning at his mother's home at Compton, Calif., as the suspect in the slaying of a Dunes Hotel security guard.

Homicide Lt. John Conner said two Metro detectives were dispatched to Compton last Wednesday afternoon and the teenager was arrested about 6 a.m. Frederick DeWayne Harvey was reportedly taken into custody without any resistance.

"We took tests and were hired as advisors. When Gov. Mike O'Callaghan first came into office, he appointed Robert Archie as Executive Director of the Employment Security," recalled Rome. "Five 'guinea pigs' were originally hired to determine if non-degreed personnel could work as Counselors. Archie found the 'guinea pigs' were doing a top-notch job and proceeded to draw-up a legally binding contract for the advisors to obtain 30 master counseling hours in the UNLV system. Upon completion of the work they were reclassified as Counselors — although their duties were not changed."

Due to recent budgetary cuts, 59 employees from across the State had to be laid off from the Employment Security Department — 21 of whom were from CETA in the Southern region, and were notified through a letter delivered directly by the office manager.

Evelyn Coleman asserted that the Employment Security lost their contract with CETA thus prompting the staff cuts. However, she indicated the Employment Security did not exercise the longevity rights or seniority rights, particularly of non-whites.

"What they have done was to notify us of the layoff by mail and said we had bumping rights, but did not say where we could be bumped to," she continued.

In the Southern region, it was reported

that 32 lost their jobs. The composition of the group involved 1 Indian, 6 Hispanics, 9 Caucasians and 16 Blacks. Only one black counselor will be retained in the State and she is Donna Shipp, who became the first black counselor and was hired around 1965.

The "faithful 21" have now filed a grievance with the State of Nevada Employees Association seeking what they feel are their employment rights of being retained due to their longevity, seniority and proper performance of duties.

Responding to their grievance letter, Robert J. Gagnier, SNEA Executive Director, forwarded the grievance letter and an accompanying letter to Laurence O. McCracken, Executive Director of the Dept. of Employment in Carson City. Gagnier stated that "this grievance is being filed directly with you because the layoff letter came directly from you and filing the grievance with any subordinate level of supervision would be a useless act. In addition, time is of essence in that the layoffs are due to take effect on September 10th."

The "faithful 21" have not been dragging their feet for they have obtained legal counsel to follow through on their plight.

As Gloria Rome has put it, "We have just begun." The group appears to have formed a solid base to seek proper redress to the problem.

Woman Believed Strangled At Home

A 35 year old woman, found dead in the bedroom of her apartment on West Washington Avenue during a fire, had been strangled, authorities said Tuesday.

The victim was identified as Victoria Edwards. An autopsy Tuesday revealed the cause of death was strangulation, and the case was turned over to Metropolitan Police homicide investigators.

The body was discovered after firefighters responded to

a fire in the apartment at 5812 W. Washington Ave. about 1:30 a.m. Tuesday. Fire officials said the blaze, contained to a bedroom, was caused by careless handling of smoking materials.

Homicide Sgt. Frank Jergovic said arson and homicide investigators will inspect the apartment for evidence.

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