

# Mass murder of families part of scary LA trend

## Special to Sentinel-Voice

A man fatally shot his wife, five young children and himself, claiming in a note he faxed to a TV station stating that the couple had just been fired from their hospital jobs and together planned the killings as an escape for the whole family.

"Why leave our children in someone else's hands?" Ervin Lupoe wrote in his letter to KABC-TV. The station posted the letter on its website later with some parts redacted.

The station called police after receiving the fax and a phone call from Lupoe, and a police dispatch center also received a call from a man who said, "I just returned home and my whole family's been shot."



This undated family photograph obtained from Ervin Antonio Lupoe's Facebook Web page shows Ervin Antonio Lupoe, top left, his wife, Ana, top right, and their five children: Britney, top, twin girls Jaszmin and Jassely and twin boys Benjamin and Christian.

Officers rushed to the home in Wilmington, a small community between the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, about 8:30 a.m. and found the bodies.

All were shot in the head, some multiple times, coroner's Assistant Chief Ed Winter said. The killings may have occurred between Monday evening and early Tuesday, based on neighbors' accounts of firecracker sounds, he said.

Although the fax asserted that Ana Lupoe planned the killings of the whole family, police Lt. John Romero said Ervin Lupoe was the suspect. A revolver was found next to his body.

The *Los Angeles Times* reports that area police continued their investigation, a

day after mourners held a candlelight vigil outside the home where the recently fired X-ray technician killed his wife, his children and then himself.

Ana Lupoe's body was found in an upstairs bedroom with the bodies of the couple's twin 2-year-old boys. The bodies of an 8-year-old girl and twin 5-year-old girls were found alongside Ervin Lupoe in another bedroom. Both parents were 40.

It was the fifth mass death of a Southern California family by murder or suicide in a year. Police urged those facing tough economic times to get help rather than resort to violence.

"Today our worst fear was (See Murder, Page 4)

## Chief

(Continued from Page 1)

The 65-page report, released publicly on Jan. 13, says that Schlozman, based on employee interviews, went as far as to use terms such as "commies" and "crazy libs" in emails when describing people that he aimed to weed out of the division between 2003 and 2006.

The report concludes, "The evidence in our investigation showed that Schlozman, first as a Deputy Assistant Attorney General and subsequently as Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General and Acting Assistant Attorney General, considered political and ideological affiliations in hiring career attorneys and in other personnel actions affecting career attorneys in the Civil Rights Division. In doing so, he violated federal law — the Civil Service Reform Act — and Department policy that prohibit discrimination in federal employment based on political and ideological affiliations, and committed misconduct."

Federal law states that such hires must not include political considerations; but rather, civil rights qualifications, which the report said was often excluded.

Because Schlozman is no longer a DOJ employee, he is not subject to disciplinary actions, the report concludes, but recommends that his illegal activity at the DOJ be considered if ever seeks federal employment again.

The report also says that division managers "failed to exercise sufficient oversight

to ensure that Schlozman did not engage in inappropriate hiring and personnel practices. Moreover, Schlozman made false statements about whether he considered political and ideological affiliations when he gave sworn testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee and in his written responses to supplemental questions from the Committee."

In a nutshell, the crucial civil rights division is said to

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— Ted Shaw



have been left in a mess.

"What the Bush administration did was particularly abandon civil rights enforcement on behalf of African-Americans — especially African-Americans," said Ted Shaw, former director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, who is now a law professor at Columbia University. "They focused where they could on finding so-called reverse discrimination cases, refused to use the full panoply of civil rights enforcement tools that were available to it and, in general, had more of a relationship with defendants in civil rights cases."

Shaw says the Bush Jus-

Department was more concerned about defendants found in violation of civil rights laws than with civil rights lawyers and plaintiffs.

"The one thing that the department is going to have to do is restore its relationship with the civil rights community," he said. "I think that can be done fairly quickly. But, the damage has been done in terms of the career attorneys that have been lost from the division, the

morale, and the turnover within the division, that won't be done as quickly. That will take some time to do."

Political chatter about new leadership at the Civil Rights Division is escalating as the civil rights world awaits the outcome of the delayed confirmation of Eric Holder, Obama's nominee for attorney general.

Holder, the head of the DOJ, is expected to be confirmed, but he was still under scrutiny by Senate Republicans this week. Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., requested the delay of his confirmation on behalf of Judiciary Committee Republicans, who wanted to ask

Holder additional questions about his support of several pardons and clemencies of former President Clinton. Holder was then deputy attorney general.

Meanwhile, lawyers considered to be civil rights leaders and watchdogs are looking forward to who Obama will choose to lead his Civil Rights Division, which, in short, is responsible for the enforcement and defense of civil rights laws, many of which disparately affect African-Americans.

They include all voting rights and redistricting laws; criminal justice issues such as police profiling, police misconduct and sentencing disparities; race discrimination in hiring such as fair procurement, affirmative action and equal opportunity; plus hate crimes, most of which the civil rights community say have been totally neglected during the Bush administration.

New York-based civil rights activist Al Sharpton, who led a march around the Justice Department in late 2007, called for prosecution of hate crimes and political brutality cases.

"The qualifications ought to be someone who is skilled in civil rights prosecution and investigation," said Sharpton. "I think they should immediately look at the ongoing police brutality cases from the case of Sean Bell in New York all the way to the [Oscar Grant III] case in Oakland, California, those are the leading cases."

Wade Henderson, president and CEO of the Leader-

ship Conference on Civil Rights, who calls this "a critical time in the history of the civil rights division," agrees with Sharpton on the skills description.

"The new assistant attorney general for civil rights must be an accomplished lawyer with a deep background and understanding of the nation's civil rights. He or she should also have firsthand knowledge of the... Civil Rights division."

Henderson says the recent report "has confirmed our worst fears about the manipulation of the division for political purposes."

Henderson concludes, "For many years, the division has been mired in politics and well-deserved controversy. It has turned its back on its major responsibilities and has become an ideological tool of the previous administration. This must be changed," he said.

## • PUBLIC NOTICE •

### Pecos Road Study

The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) invites you to learn about the proposed concept of a Pecos Road bridge over Interstate 15 (I-15).

The RTC is conducting a planning study of Pecos Road from the Clark County 215/Northern Beltway to Boulder Highway.

The study's purpose is to determine ways to improve traffic flow, transit options, cyclist and pedestrian safety and the feasibility of a bridge over I-15 connecting Pecos Road and ending at Craig Road.

Your comments are welcome.

#### PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, February 11, 2009  
4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.  
Walnut Recreation Center  
3075 North Walnut Avenue  
Las Vegas, NV 89115

#### QUESTIONS:

(702) 676-1606 or [rtcsonv.com](http://rtcsonv.com)  
TDD: (702) 676-1834

To request a Spanish or sign language interpreter, please call at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.

