

Clears Officers On Their Version Of Street Slaying

Minister, Escort Tell Chronicle They Didn't See Woman Turn Around

By ROY W. STEPHENS

As the bewildered mother of a 24-year-old woman, slain by a police officer who sought to arrest her early Friday morning, made final preparations for her funeral, the Wayne County Prosecutor's office ruled the shooting "justifiable homicide" and said Negro eye-witnesses were "too biased."

Funeral services for Cynthia Scott, of 83 Edmund Pl., Apt. 202, will be held in St. John's CME church, Woodward at Blaine, Saturday at 11 a.m. The Rev. Isiah Scipio will officiate.

News of the fatal shooting raced swiftly throughout the city and raised the ire of the Negro community. Less than nine hours after Miss Scott was shot twice in the back and once in the stomach by a scout car patrolman, a throng had gathered near police headquarters in an informal protest against what has been called an "unnecessary" killing.

Prosecutor Samuel H. Olsen's decision that the slaying was justified, also brought a howl of protest from various segments of the community.

In a letter to Police Superintendent Eugene Rueter, the NAACP demanded a full and immediate investigation "to determine if this tragic slaying . . . can be justified by the rule of sound police practice . . ."

Another protest was launched by the Group on Advanced Leadership.

Richard B. Henry, president of the organization, called for members of the Negro community "to join members of GOAL on Saturday, July 20, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. in a protest picket line at 1300 Beaubien, headquarters of the Police department and Prosecutor's office."

Henry said the picket line protest is "aimed at discrimination in hiring and upgrading in the police department and at the open season which the police and prosecutor have declared against Negro lives and rights."

In exonerating Patrolman Theodore Spicher, Supt. Rueter said there was "no violation of the rules and regulations of this department in the officer's actions" and no trial board action would be taken.

"The case is closed as far as we are concerned", he said. Olsen's ruling was made after Spicher and his partner, Patrolman Robert Marshall, and other witnesses gave widely-conflict-



CYNTHIA SCOTT

ing accounts of incidents which led to the slaying of Miss Scott.

According to the police officers, they were driving south on John R at 3 a.m. Friday when they saw Miss Scott walking south on the east side of the street. She was accompanied by Charles Marshall, 21, of 3492 St. Antoine.

The patrolmen said Miss Scott held "several bills of currency" in her hand and they pulled alongside the couple to investigate.

Patrolman Spicher, who confiscated a pocket knife from Marshall, said his partner was questioning the youth and he was placing Miss Scott in the scout car when she slashed him with a pocket knife and started to run across the street.

Spicher said he fired two shots at her from his .38 calibre service revolver although she reached the west side of the street. Both shots struck the woman in the back.

Miss Scott, the patrolman said, then turned—the knife still in her hand—as he neared her and he fired a third shot, striking her in the lower right stomach.

(Continued on Page 2)

Olsen Clears Police

(Continued from Page 1)

Patrolman Marshall said he went to disarm Miss Scott when she slashed at him, cutting his sleeve.

Miss Scott was dead on arrival at Receiving hospital.

Three \$1 bills were taken from her body.

Patrolman Spicher was given first aid for a laceration of the second finger of the left hand.

It was on this report that Olsen ruled Patrolman Spicher "had a legal right to take the necessary steps to apprehend the fleeing felon."

Many persons in the area, expressing the view that Miss Scott, an admitted prostitute who stood six feet, four inches, was known to Spicher and other officers who patrolled the vicinity, termed the slaying "unnecessary."

Referring to citizen eye-witnesses who gave strikingly-different versions of the incident, Assistant Pro-

secuting Attorney Max Silverman told the Chronicle that Olsen felt they were "too biased".

Charles Marshall, Miss Scott's escort on the morning of the slaying, gave the following statement to the Chronicle:

"I met Cynthia at about 2:45 Friday morning at the corner of Watson and John R. I had been out celebrating the Fourth of July. She asked me to walk her to her apartment on Edmund as I had known Cynthia for about three and a half months.

"My twin brother, Carl, and I used to tease her all the time and called her 'Slim'. There was never any personal relationship between us . . . we were just friends and that is all.

"Anyway, I agreed to walk her home. When we had walked about a block, she suggested we stop by a Chinese restaurant ('The Formosa Inn') and offered to pay me to walk her there, wait for

her and then walk her home.

"She told me she had \$43 and could easily pay me for waiting for her. I told her I didn't want her to pay me but that I would go to the restaurant and wait for her.

"We started across the street and she took my arm. Just then the taller of the two policemen jumped out of the car and ordered Cynthia to get into the car. I looked at him and asked what had she done to have to get into the car.

"He shouted at us: 'You people don't understand English. I said get into the car!' I told him that if he was going to arrest Cynthia, he would have to arrest me also. He continued to shout at Cynthia and ordered her into the car. Then his partner got out of the car and ordered me to stand against the police car and be searched.

"While he was searching me, Cynthia turned her back on the other policeman and walked toward the other side of the street. She told me she wasn't going to pay attention to him because hadn't done anything to be arrested for.

"Then I saw the policeman pull his gun out and shoot at Cynthia. I thought he was trying to frighten her. At this time the other policeman was standing beside me. Then the taller policeman fired twice at me and I saw Cynthia fall to the ground.

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"We went to Receiving hospital and when the police saw me, they ordered I go to the Police department and tell my story. At that time I would not allow a tall policeman to take me to homicide. After that I would shoot a woman I don't know what she had done to me.

A statement was given to the Chronicle after the slaying by Alfonso Campbell Canfield, pastor of the St. Paulian Orthodox church.

The Rev. Mr. Canfield, who said he was on the block after the slaying, saw Miss Scott being taken to the hospital by a policeman and then started to walk away.

"At that point the policeman fired on me when the woman started to walk away, and more shots directed at the minister's

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A statement was also given to the Chronicle a short time after the slaying by the Rev. Alfonso Campbell, of 3309 E. Canfield, pastor of the Ethio- pian Orthodox church.

•The Rev. Mr. Campbell, who said he was riding around the block after returning from the theater, reported he saw Miss Scott "talking to a policeman and then turn and start to walk away.

"At that point, the police- man fired one shot and, when the woman continued to walk away, he fired two more shots directly at her", the minister said.

The Rev. Mr. Campbell said he did not see Miss Scott turn around and face the officer.

Mrs. Lillian Scott, of 13221 14th, Apt. 408, mother of the slain woman, said she had been told a similar version by persons who said they witnessed the incident.

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"Still, I never expected anything to happen the way it had", Mrs. Scott said. She also wondered about the \$43 her escort was quoted as say- ing Cynthia had. Only \$3 was found.

She said her daughter, who celebrated her 24th birthday anniversary two days before her death, had lived at home "until she was about 18 or 19 years old. Then she went out on her own".

Mrs. Scott said she and her daughter's father, now divorced, were separated be- fore Cynthia's birth and he had seen her only "two or three" times. She believed he was living in California.

Mrs. Scott also pointed out that Patrolman Spicher re- cently involved in an assert- police brutality case involv- ing a close friend, James Gendraws, 40, a Great Lakes Steel employee who lives at 2711 St. Antoine.

Gendraws was stopped for speeding Easter Sunday morn- ing by Patrolman Spicher who told superiors he was forced to subdue the motorist when he resisted arrest.

Five witnesses, however, said the only thing Gen- draws did was ask why he was being stopped.

Gendraws was taken to Re- ceiving hospital where stitches were taken to close his scalp.

A witness, Oliver J. Mc- Clure, Jr., of 2701 St. Antoine, was quoted as saying the two officers (one identified as Spicher) beat Gendraws "so viciously I told my wife to call the police station hoping they would send someone who would act more humane- ly and stop this uncalled-for attack on a citizen".

A complaint against Spicher was dropped when police dismissed charges of resisting arrest against Gen- draws.

In his statement exonerat- ing Patrolman Spicher, Olsen noted that an appeal for new laws has been made to ban the carrying of certain types of knives.

"Actually," he said, "the simple and much more prac- tical solution would be to permit our police officials to enforce the laws that we now have on our statute books.

"Judicial decisions through- out the country, in the im- portant field of search and seizure and confessions, have so restricted law en- forcement officials that their work has been seriously impaired.

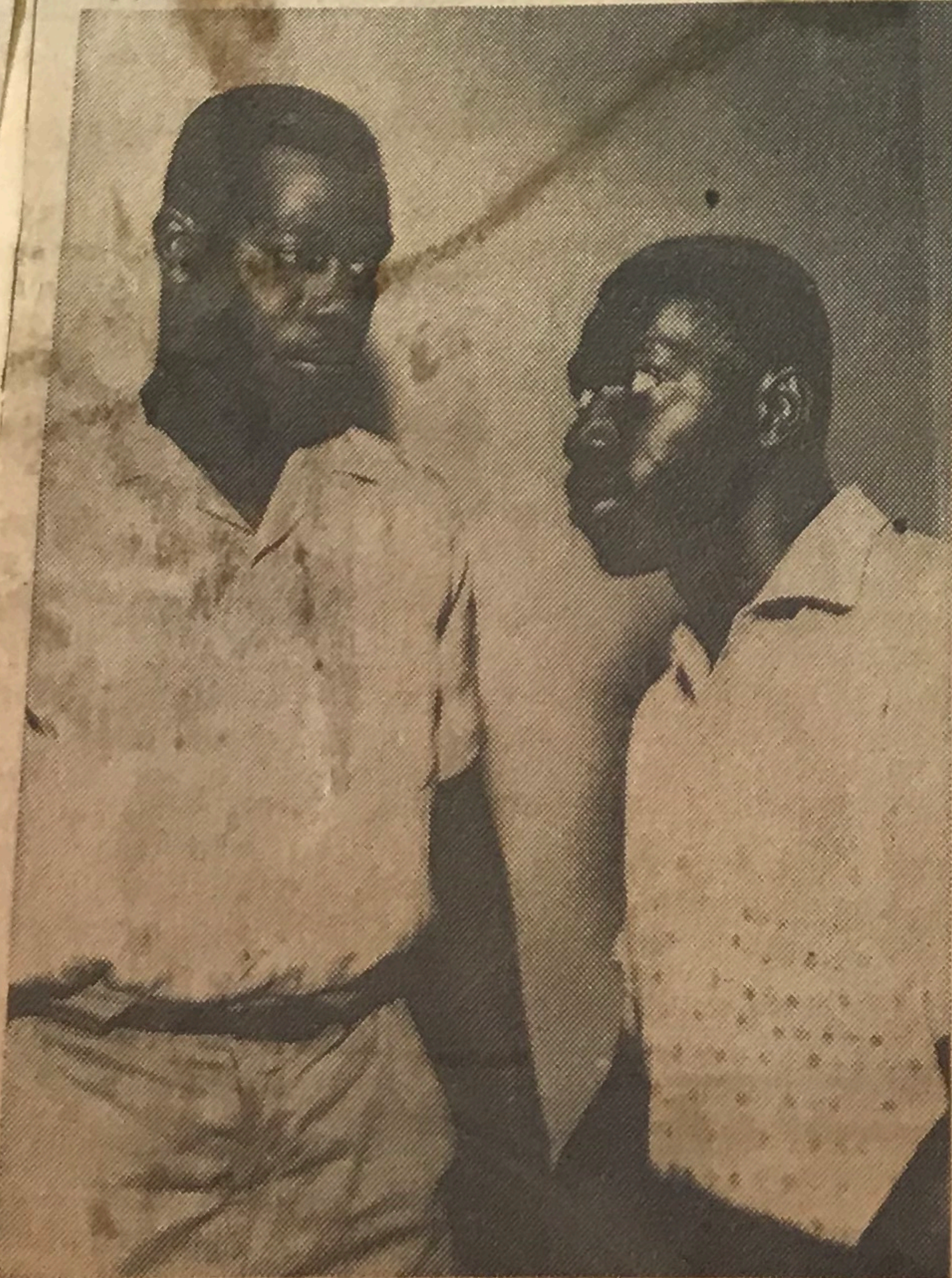
"When there is a 'head-on collision' between the rights of the individual defendant and the general public inter- est, the latter should prevail.

"This case, for example, re- presents a classic example of utter and complete contempt for law and order", Olsen said.

Funeral arrangements for Miss Scott are under the direction of the Thompson Funeral home, Dexter and Whitney, and the body can be viewed from Thursday through Saturday.

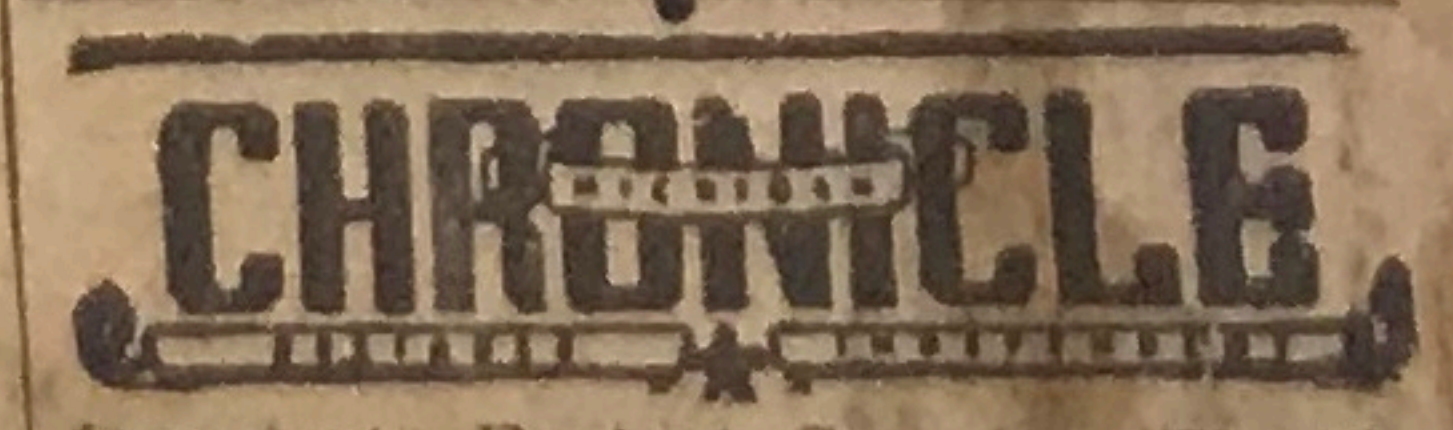


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CHARLES AND CARL MARSHALL

Prosecutor Olsen on Slaying: "WITNESSES TOO BIASSED"



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LONGWORTH QUINN, Editor-General Manager

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