Two escapes since Sept. 4

Swisher orders probe into jail security

A rash of escapes by City Jail unmates has prompted Baltimore State Attorney William Swisher to institute a probe into the problems of jail security.

Since Monday, Sept. 4, City Jail authorities have reported two separate escapes. The first incident occurred shortly before 8:30 a.m. Monday when three inmates overpowered a jail guard with a gun and a homemade knife.

Swisher said, in ordering the investigation, he wants to determine how one of the prisoners obtained a gun while in jail.

The latest escape which took police and jail guards by surprise, happened about 10 p.m. Wednesday William Thornton, 23, awaiting trial on charges of Armed Robbery, lowered himself down a guard tower on a 25 - foot rope made out of bed sheets, and escaped.

Police are still looking for Thornton who lowered himself onto nearby railroad tracks and the fled on foot.

The three inmates who escaped Monday, however, fled in a hijacked van with two city employees as hostages.

The prisoners, identified as James Moore, 20; William McJoy, 29; and Clyde Thurmon, 20, all of Baltimore, abandoned the van about half an hour later and released their prisoners.

Police reports show the fugitives used a smuggled gun and a knife to capture and handcuff two jail security officers.

They then mingled at the main gate with a group of work - release inmates leaving for their jobs.

One of the excapees, Moore, 800 block Woodington Ave., was indicated recently in a June 20 escape attempt that ended in a police siege of the Courthouse. The incident resulted in a shootout.

Moore had been arrested, after a previous escape from the Maryland House of Correction, and was awaiting trial on charges of armed robbery and kidnapping. He was indicted for attempted murder in the Courthouse shootout.

The hijacked van, belonging to the Primary Alcoholic Treatment program, was parked in the 110 block Forrest St., about three blocks from the jail.

A city employee, William A. Johnson, 28, 4000 block Alto Rd., was sitting behind the wheel when the abduction took place. Another employee for the treatment program, Jeanette Scott, 23, 1100 block Orleans St., told police she was standing on the sidewalk when two men forced her into the front of the van.

Warning the two against any "foul play," the escpaees ordered Johnson to drive to Orleans Street and Broadway where Thurman got out. The remaining fugitive ordered their hostages to drive to chalres street and North Avenue where they abandoned the van.

Police said the two hostages then came by the jail and reported the incident.

Ordering the investigation Tuesday, Swisher said he was more concerned with how the prisoners obtained the gun.

"The main item is how did Moore get the gun," Swisher said.

Last rites held for C. Venable

Funeral services for Claude J. Venable, 76, were held Sept. 7 at Faith Baptist Church.

Mr. Venable had been employed for Bethlehem Steel for 47 years and lived in the 2000 block Washington St.

He retired in 1967 as a motor car operator and had been a member of Faith Baptist for 46 years. He was also an active member of the Clifton Neighborhood Civic Association.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Pearl Smith Venable; a daughter, Mrs. Virginia Robinson; two sons, Berkly and Saterfield Venable, one sister, Mrs. Mamie Warren of New Jersey; eight grandchildren and four great grand children.

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Black jobless rate double that of whites

WASHINGTON — According to the latest figures released Sept. 1, the nation's unemployment rate acted "much like a yo - yo this summer," falling to 5.9 percent of the work force in August.

Although the rate for blacks and other minorities went down from 12.5 to 11.7 percent, their jobless rate is still more than twice that of the 5.2 percent recorded for whites and twice that of the national rate overall.

Total employment rose by 156,000 persons last month to 94.6 million, the Labor Department said. The 5.9 percent jobless rate compared with 6.2 percent in July and June's 5.7 percent - a four - year low.

Here is an unemployment breakdown of each category of the population:

— Adult men: 4.1 percent, unchanged from July.

— Adult women: 6.1 percent, down from 6.5 percent.

— Teen - agers: 15.6 percent, down from 16.3 percent.

— Whites: 5.2 percent down from 5.3 percent.

Man killed in fight with girlfriend's hubby

A [illegible] was stabbed to death in an altercation in the 1800 block N. Chapel St., Friday night.

Pronounced dead at the scene was Clarence Carter, a 47 - year - old unemployed resident of the 1700 block N. Caroline St. He was stabbed in the upper chest.

Charged with the killing was Clarence Davis, 38, 2400 block E. Biddle St., the estranged husband, who is out of jail on $1,000 bond.

Police records show the dead man, described as the boyfriend of Davis' estranged wife, Rosemary, 32, [illegible] Davis with a large knife when Davis showed up at Carter's house to persuade his wife to come home to her children.

Witnesses told police sometime between 11:30 p.m. and midnight Friday, they saw Davis driving a red and white pickup truck pull up in front of a house in the 1800 block N. Chapel St.

Davis and his two children alighted from the truck and knocked on the door where a woman who answered the door, began heaping insult on Davis despite his protestations that "he wanted his wife to come home and take care of the kids."

Police reports reveal: "It was about this time that Clarence Carter came outside from the house. Carter was observed by these witnesses pulling a large knife from his pocket. Both men began fighting."

During the struggle, witnesses were reported as saying they saw Davis wrestle the knife from Carter and stabbed the victim in the chest. Carter staggered towards the house and collasped in the hallway.

Police who responded to a call for help found the victim face down in the hallway approximately three inches inside the door. Police said they recovered the knife and another small kitchen knife.

Relatives could not be reached for comment and, at AFRO press time, funeral arrangement were unknown.

Away from home

U.S. Army Completed Training Cadet George A. Griffin III, son of retired Lt. Col. George A. Griffin, 5866 Whisper Way, recently completed six weeks of training in fundamental military skills at the Army ROTC basic camp at Fort Knox, Ky.

The bsic camp is designed to give junior college grades and college sophomores who have not taken ROTC courses the chance to enter the program. The camp also qualifies high school graduates for the ROTC program at any one the nation's six military junior colleges.

A 1974 graduate of Glen Burnie High School, Griffin is enrolled in ROTC at Loyola College, Baltimore.

Sgt. Bob Harris, son of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Harris, 901 Elton Ave., recently completed a basic noncommissioned officer course at Fort Hood, Texas.

Harris entered the Army in March 1975. He attended Essex Community College.

Cadet Maurice B. Fowlkes, son of Mrs. Ella Fowlkes, 1516 E. Lanvale St., recently completed six weeks of training in fundamental military skills at the Army ROTCbasic camp at Fort Knox, Ky.

The basic camp is designed to give junior college grades and college sophomores who have not taken ROTC courses the chance to enter the program. The camp also qualifies high school graduates for the ROTC program at any one of the nation's six military junior colleges.

Fowlkes, a student at Morgan State University, is a 1972 graduate of Northern High School.

Cadet Michael C. Williams, son of Mrs. Dorothy Jones, 4305 Pentwurst Ave., recently completed six weeks of training in fundamental military skills at the Army ROTC basic camp at Fort Knox, Ky.

Williams is a student at Morgan State University, Baltimore. He is a 1972 graduate of Loyola High School, Towson, Md.

Assigned

Pvt. Anthony Ford, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ford, 1317 N. Chapel St., recently was assigned at a chemical, biological and radiological specialist with the 8th Infantry Division in Mannheim, Germany.

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