

State / National

New grand jury to renew slain Judge Wood inquiry

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO — Amid claims that investigators have solved the case, a new federal

grand jury apparently will take up the inquiry Wednesday into the assassination of U.S. District Judge John Wood Jr. — the first

federal judge killed in the line of duty.

At least one defense attorney, William Ravkind of Dallas, believes the grand jury will indict several people in the Wood slaying and his client, El Paso attorney Joe Chagra, may be one of those charged.

"They (federal prosecutors) know everything about the killing," Ravkind said. "I think they have enough to prove it and are just tying up some loose ends."

Wood, who was known as "Maximum John" for his tough sentencing of drug offenders, was shot in the back outside his north San Antonio townhouse on May 29, 1979. Federal officials have said the Wood investigation has been as thorough as inquiries into the assassinations of U.S. presidents.

A special grand jury convened shortly after Wood's death to try to solve the slaying, but the panel

reportedly disbanded last month without issuing any indictments in the case.

Although the panel reportedly dissolved, U.S. District Judge William Sessions of San Antonio has imposed a gag order on the grand jury proceedings and federal officials have refused to confirm or deny a new grand jury was organized.

Ravkind, who accompanied Chagra through more than five hours of interviews with federal investigators in San Antonio last week, said Chagra is anxious to prove he was not involved in the Wood slaying.

"I hope to God they (FBI agents) haven't arrived at a point where they have to indict Joe (Chagra) because of the evidence they seized from his office," Ravkind said.

Ravkind said evidence seized from Chagra's El Paso office and home, which reportedly included

a map showing where the weapon was hidden and tape recordings of meetings between Chagra and clients, will be ordered illegal evidence unless El Paso attorney is indicted.

"What scares me is that we have to indict the lawyer or the information they took was considered privileged information," Ravkind said. "It's a serious death they (federal officials) backed into a corner."

The federal investigation recently has focused on convicted hitman Charles V. Harrelson, being held without bond in Houston jail. Chagra had sentenced Harrelson in the murder trial.

Chagra's brother, gambler my Chagra who is currently in a 30-year federal prison for continuing criminal activity, was scheduled to appear in Wood when the judge was



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Sun states fight for equal energy aid for heating bills

WASHINGTON — A battle between Frost Belt and Sun Belt states over aid to the poor to pay home energy bills erupted Tuesday, with Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, vowing to kill the program unless it is made fairer to southern states.

"It is an indisputable fact that heat can kill as surely and as massively as cold," Bentsen told a Senate Labor and Human Resources subcommittee.

He said deaths caused by the heat wave that swept southern and central states last summer "may have been as many as 4,000."

Connecticut Gov. William O'Neill and Massachusetts Gov. Edward King, representing northeastern governors, urged the panel to re-authorize the energy aid at \$1.85 billion, the same as last year, even though President Reagan has authorized only \$1.4 billion.

"Unless this program can be made more efficient and equitable, then I will lead the fight not just to cut it by one-quarter, but rather to eliminate the program altogether," said Bentsen.

He accused Frost Belt lawmakers of "intolerant

regionalism" for slanting the aid last year to colder parts of the country.

"In their aversion for regional conflict, legislation from the Northeast and Midwest prevented a soaring air conditioning bill last year "by amending the program so that no funds could be expended during the summer months," Bentsen said.

Emergency legislation had to be passed to allow poor pay their air conditioning bills during the wave, he said.

"It grieves me to think of how many of the dead might have been helped, might have had this kind of regionalism could have been solved and a truly national program — to serve all regions," Bentsen said.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., opposed cuts in the program, saying many poor people state had no blankets on their beds because they used them instead to insulate windows.

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, said administration proposed cutting such aid 25 percent while moving to decontrol natural gas prices. "It's not economy. It's cruelty," he said.

He's not kidding with goat idea

VINELAND, N.J. — There are those who say Mayor Patrick Fiorilli is making a laughing stock

of the city with his goat patrol proposal.

Fiorilli says the goats could trim weeds in overgrown lots. And he says his critics, City Council President Carlo Costantino and Councilman Gino Baruffi, actually were the ones who produced the idea.

"The whole thing is a publicity stunt," Costantino said. "Fiorilli got what he wanted — some news-

paper headlines and even television time. But the thing makes Vineland look ridiculous."

Fiorilli recently proposed chaining goats on city-owned lots to eat the weeds. The patrol "mow the lawns from one end to the other," he said, and would save the money by eliminating the need for gas-guzzling lawn mowers.

The city could earn a profit selling the goats' milk to a dairy manufacturer, the mayor added.

Fiorilli said he got the idea from a recent tour of blighted neighborhoods. Costantino said weeds were used to be a problem "because all the Italian families around here had goats and goats ate the weeds."

A few days later, Fiorilli presented the proposal public.



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