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World and Nation

Woman kills 2 in mall shooting spree

Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Pa. — A woman in army fatigues and black boots opened fire with a semiautomatic rifle in a crowded shopping mall Wednesday, killing two people and wounding eight others before she was subdued by a passerby, police said.

Silvia Seegrift, 28, was taken into custody following the 4 p.m. shooting rampage at the Springfield Mall in Delaware County, said Police Chief George Hill.

Police then closed the shopping center.

Police had dealt with the Springfield Township woman before because of "emotional problems," said John McKenna of the Delaware County district attorney's office.

She was scheduled to be arraigned later Wednesday night.

Seegrift got out of her car at an entrance to the mall and began shooting the .22-caliber rifle at a woman using an automatic bank machine, but missed her, Hill said.

"Then she began firing at every-

body and anybody who got in her path," he said.

A 4-year-old boy was killed near the entrance to the mall, Hill said.

She then moved inside the mall, turning and firing as she worked her way through the crowded main walkway, firing more than 15 shots in less than five minutes, Hill said.

"The woman went on a random shooting rampage until she was wrestled to the ground by a college student" outside a shoe store, he said.

Jack Laufer, 24, of Media,

"grabbed her from behind, tied her to the ground and took the rifle away," Hill said.

She still had several rounds in the rifle when the student grabbed her, he said.

It was not immediately clear where the man in his 40s was shot. The victims, who ranged in age from 2 to 67, were taken to hospitals.

Of the eight injured, one was in serious condition and the 67-year-old man underwent surgery for a head wound.

Democrats say cutting staff may undermine Social Security program

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional Democrats charged Wednesday that President Reagan's attempt to cut 17,000 positions from Social Security's staff by 1990 is a back-door effort to erode service and undermine support for the program.

Several senators and representatives held a news conference to release copies of internal Social Security documents discussing possible cutbacks in service.

"It's all a very clever game to build up public antipathy and resentment of the program," said Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, where officials are acutely worried about a potential loss of thousands of jobs at the Social Security Administration headquarters in Baltimore.

The Reagan administration has acknowledged previously it wants to eliminate 17,000 of Social Security's 79,600 jobs by 1990 through attrition. But spokesman James M. Brown said Wednesday, "There is absolutely no list of offices to be closed or combined."

Twenty-four members of the House, including two Republicans, Virginia Smith of Nebraska and Clarence E. Miller of Ohio, signed a letter urging colleagues to accept a Senate appropriations rider that would bar Social Security from cutting 1,000 jobs or closing offices in fiscal 1986.

Sen. Lawton Chiles, D-Fla., the author with Sarbanes of that prohibition, said lines at the nation's 1,300 Social Security offices already are "too long" and any plan for further cutbacks is "reprehensible."

Social Security already has reduced its staff by the equivalent of 7,000 full-time workers in the past four years.

An Aug. 29, 1985, memo by Louis D. Enoff, deputy Social Security commissioner for programs and policy, said that clerks spend the largest amount of time helping people piece together all the information needed to get a retirement benefit.

He suggested that a change "such as altering the assistance we provide claimants in obtaining evidence could have a big payoff."

Another recent memo from Deputy Commissioner Herbert R. Doggett Jr. advised Social Security's 10 regional commissioners to keep a tighter lid on studies of potential office closings or reorganizations.

It said they should not contact local advocacy or community groups before clearing any closing with Baltimore.

Wilbur Cohen, secretary of health, education and welfare in the Johnson administration, said, "This whole thing is engineered by the Office of Management and Budget." He said people only go to Social Security offices when they retire, become disabled, someone dies or are seeking help from Medicare with hospital bills.

Name may change

U.S. Steel bids for oil company

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — United States Steel Corp. said Wednesday it agreed to acquire Texas Oil & Gas Corp. through an exchange of about \$3.6 billion in stock, a move that would further a shift away from its steelmaking roots.

David Roderick, the chairman of U.S. Steel, also said he was keeping an open mind about changing the name of the nation's leading steelmaker to reflect that steel and related sales now account for only 34 percent of overall revenue, a figure that would shrink if the merger is completed.

"We don't think we're backing away from steel," Roderick said. "This was a stock transaction. It took away no cash from our steel operations."

Texas Oil & Gas, one of the largest independent natural gas companies, is a highly regarded low-cost producer that is known for the freedom it gives its division managers.

U.S. Steel offered to exchange 0.633 share of its common stock for each share of Texas Oil & Gas, including the 14.5 million shares, or 6.9 percent, of Texas Oil & Gas that is held by its pension trustee, U.S. Steel and Carnegie Pension Fund.

Based on a closing price Tuesday, before the deal was announced, of \$27.50 a share for U.S. Steel, the swap for the 210.3 million shares of Texas Oil & Gas

would be worth \$3.66 billion, or about \$17.42 a share.

But after the offer was announced, both U.S. Steel and Texas Oil & Gas shares fell, apparently because investors did not find the offer of U.S. Steel stock attractive and because they had doubts about the performance of Texas Oil & Gas under U.S. Steel ownership.

"We don't think we're backing away from steel. This was a stock transaction. It took away no cash from our steel operations."

— David Roderick, U.S. Steel chairman

U.S. Steel was the most actively traded stock Wednesday on the New York Stock Exchange, falling 75 cents to \$26.75 a share, a price that would make the purchase of the remaining shares worth \$3.56 billion, or \$16.94 a share. Texas Oil & Gas was the second most active issue, dropping \$1.37 to \$16.50 a share.

The offer was well below the \$5.2 billion that analysts earlier had estimated for a Texas Oil & Gas takeover.

But to protect itself against losing to a higher bid, U.S. Steel received an option to buy 38.9 mil-

lion unissued shares of Texas Oil & Gas at \$17.42 a share. Hill negotiated an option to buy three key gas pipeline subsidiaries of Texas Oil & Gas for \$1.1 billion, a purchase that would make the remaining assets less attractive to another suitor.

Completion of the deal is subject to antitrust clearance by the government and approval by stockholders.

If the takeover is concluded, planned early next year, the combination would further expand one of the largest companies in the country, giving it total assets of about \$23 billion and annual revenues of approximately \$2 billion.

The merger is U.S. Steel's second big venture into the oil business in four years. It paid \$6.5 billion in 1981 to acquire Marathon Oil Co.

Marathon contributed \$2.2 billion, or 53 percent, of U.S. Steel's 1984 sales of \$19.1 billion.

U.S. Steel produced 15.1 million tons of raw steel last year, Roderick said. The company has been investing in better steel facilities at an annual rate of \$400 million.

"We're absolutely committed to continuing that course of action," he said.

The company's commitment to its name may be less enduring.

"We're not hung up that we would never change the name," Roderick said. "We have no plans, but our minds are open."

South African election show mixed results

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — The National Party, putting its race reform measures on the line with white voters in five special parliamentary elections, handily won one race Wednesday, narrowly defeated an ultra-rightist in another and lost a third, unofficial returns showed.

Results were not in from two conservative farming communities.

The elections were viewed as a gauge of white feeling toward the government's limited moves away from apartheid after 14 months of black riots and a deepening economic crisis.

Meanwhile, police said at least seven blacks were killed Wednesday and late Tuesday in violence believed linked to unrest against apartheid, South Africa's system of enforced racial separation.

In Sasolburg, south of Johannesburg, an ultra-right candidate, Louis Stofberg of the Reformed National Party, defeated the National Party candidate by 367 votes out of nearly 13,000 cast.

Stofberg's victory was the first parliamentary seat won by his party since it broke from the National

Party 16 years ago when the Nationalists suggested allowing racial integration on the country's athletic fields.

One National Party victory came in Port Natal, near Durban, where Home Minister Stoffel Botha won easily, as expected.

The second win was in Springs, a depressed blue-collar town east of Johannesburg that was heretofore solidly Nationalist.

The government's candidate, former journalist P.W. Coetzer defeated the Conservative Party candidate by only 749 votes out of nearly 10,000 cast.

Results were not in from Bethlehem and Vryburg, both farm communities.

The balloting was to fill midterm vacancies in the whites-only chamber, which has final say in the three-chamber Parliament.

Whites, people of mixed-race and Asians meet separately in the Parliament. Blacks have no vote and no chamber.

The National Party, in power since 1948, fought to hold the five seats against challenges from far-right white supremacists.

In two districts, candidates ran from a party which wants apartheid

dismantled.

The rightists argued that President P.W. Botha's avowed reform apartide signal the government is abandoning white interests and handing the nation to blacks.

All five elections were in conservative areas dominated up to now by the Nationalists, who had predicted they would keep every seat.

The National Party portends candidates as cautious, enlightened reformers who will protect white interests.

Botha campaigned in three communities, calling for national unity behind his party at a time when South Africa faces economic conditions and increased international criticism.

The rightists of the Conservative Party and the Reformed National Party said changes so far made in the country is headed toward black majority rule.

The Progressive Federal Party, which opposes race-separation, asked voters to put themselves in accord as viewing Botha's race reform as too timid. The Progressive who candidates ran in Springs, Port Natal, oppose race-separation laws, said Botha overstates the threat from the right.



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