

Scott under state board investigation . . .

(Continued from Metro)

day afternoon and had not returned by early Friday night, his secretary said. He could not be reached for comment.

A spokesman in the coroner's office said: "To be honest with you, I wasn't aware that he (Scott) was under investigation by them. However, the thought had crossed my mind that it was a possibility that it could happen."

In a memorandum Thursday, Hill asked the Board of Supervisors to terminate a joint \$120,000-a-year contract held by Drs. Scott and Root to perform autopsies for the county. The supervisors will vote on the recommendation Monday.

Supervisors Cal McElwain and

Dennis Hansberger told The Sun Friday they favored Hill's recommendation.

"It seems to be an appropriate first action," Hansberger said. "Scott's credibility is simply not good at the moment. It's the best thing to do for the public."

He said Hill was "a very good and diligent administrator" and that the next step is to upgrade the service in the office.

"It surprised me to find the coroner's office performing at a level that is obviously not satisfactory . . . I'm disappointed that things have gotten where they are. It creates all kinds of problems. I don't know how it went on for so long."

Added McElwain: "I'm ready to terminate the contract. I just don't think things have been conducive to good business. The guy (Scott) has lost all the credibility he has had."

McElwain will be out of town Monday and miss the board meeting.

Root, co-owner of Root-Scott Medical Labs, 1890 N. Waterman Ave., probably will be rehired on a separate contract to continue doing coroner's cases, Hill said. Scott, however, probably will be dropped after 17 years of work for the county, Hill added.

A spokesman at the San Bernardino County Medical Society also said it had no "information about this investigation on Dr. Scott. About all we do know about him is what we've seen in the newspaper."

However, a source in the professional society told The Sun that the Ethics Committee of that group had been given documentation "some time ago" on the "gross errors" Scott made in his Feb. 3, 1979, autopsy of Fontana murder victim Robert Renova.

The impact of the errors made in the Renova autopsy was not felt until October 1979, when the District Attorney's office lost a murder conviction and was forced to plea bargain to a lesser charge.

In the official county coroner's report, Scott claims that he sur-

gically cut a variety of internal organs in Renova's body, including the medulla, in the lower brain, the kidneys, pancreas, liver and spleen. A second autopsy surgeon, however, found those organs intact and said they were "not cut, not even once." That surgeon, Dr. F. Rene Modglin of Colton, also disagreed with Scott's cause-of-death finding in the case.

Scott later called that autopsy "my worst ever" and said the misleading, pre-written language he had used in preparing the autopsy report would be scrubbed. He said he devised the "canned," or short-cut method, as a way to save time because it allowed a typist to automatically insert a lengthy medical description of how the various organs allegedly had been incised and internally inspected.

Apparently, however, that canned method was used in cases before 1979. One such case was the autopsy of Beverly Wise, the victim of a baffling murder that police here recently reopened.

Wise was stabbed to death

At the fair

VICTORVILLE — The \$2,500 Upper Desert Handicap for thoroughbreds will highlight the San Bernardino County Fair Spring Fling today.

The seventh day of the fair and horse racing season honors the cities of Rialto and Colton as well as the community of Bloomington.

Gates open at 11 a.m., with the first race of an 11-race event starting at 1 p.m. The Victorville Quarter Horse Championship Invitational Handicap will also be featured.

Attractions include a Mexican-American Day program from 6 to 10 p.m. in the Outdoor Theater.

Los Lobos Del Este de Los Angeles and Ballet Folklorico de San Bernardino will be featured.

Other attractions are an art show, carnival, the circus, commercial, vocational and industrial exhibits.

March 30, 1977, and her two children, Brandi Jondell Summers, then 5 years old, and Tiffani Wise, then 2, were kidnapped.

The children have never been found, but police reopened the investigation in September and believe the girls are alive. Five persons have been charged in the case.

"We are aware of the Wise autopsy case," Heckl said, referring to articles published this week in The Sun, which revealed that the coroner's office in February asked the city Police Department to return its copy of the Wise autopsy report. Police refused the request.

Coroner's officials suspected the autopsy, done by Scott, may have been faulty because of the pre-

written organ descriptions Scott used in the report. "It was feared that he had not incised all the organs he said he did," a source in the coroner's office said. "And it was suggested that if we could get the autopsy reports back, the language could be fixed up a bit so the descriptions would not indicate the organs had been surgically cut. Because Scott, I guess, wasn't really sure that they had been."

Referring to the canned report method, Supervisor Hansberger said Friday, "Frankly, if Wayne Scott hadn't used it, we wouldn't be where we are today. It was that that caused the whole thing to fall apart . . . If it hadn't come to light, we'd still be going merrily along."

Analyst in apology

Gannett News Service

SACRAMENTO — The Legislative Analyst's office has issued an apology for misleading the Assembly Ways and Means Committee about the effect of a disaster relief bill carried by Assemblyman Terry Goggin.

Goggin's AB2461, appropriating \$51.5 million to aid public agencies and individuals in repairing damage caused by landslides and floods in January, was held over last week by Ways and Means because of the analyst's doubts.

Goggin, D-San Bernardino, intends that the money go to the Southern California counties — including San Bernardino — which were declared disaster areas by President Carter. But Deputy Legislative Analyst John Vickerman told the committee that AB2461 wouldn't do what Goggin wanted it to do.

Vickerman said that use of the funds appropriated by the bill could result in the loss of federal funds that local governments in California could otherwise expect to receive.

Goggin protested vehemently at the time that Vickerman was all

wet, but the majority of the committee was skeptical and referred the matter to a subcommittee for clarification.

In a letter to Ways and Means chairman John Vasconcellos, D-San Jose, Legislative Analyst William G. Hamm said Vickerman was wrong.

Hearing set

RIALTO — A preliminary hearing has been set for 8:30 a.m. May 2 at San Bernardino Municipal Court, Valley Division in Fontana, for an Arkansas man accused of manslaughter in a poolhall shooting here Monday.

Michael Elden Burris, 27, of Bradford, Ark., is being held in San Bernardino County Jail on \$25,000 bail.

Paul Gene Smith, 28, of Claremont was shot once in the chest in an argument at the 106 Club, 106 E. Valley Blvd., about 11 p.m. He died before police arrived.

A bail review hearing is set for 1:30 p.m. Thursday at Fontana.

Conference set in S.B.

SAN BERNARDINO — California State College, San Bernardino, will play host today to more than 150 high school students from throughout the Southland who are participating in the first Southern California Black Student Union conference.

The 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. conference is sponsored by the Black Student Union of San Geronio High School.

Throughout the day students will hear a panel discussion and participate in a series of workshops, one of which will be moderated by KNXT television broadcaster Truman Jacques.

The workshops include: developing leadership skills, contemporary problems in choosing a career, being successful in today's high schools and the how and why of male-female relationships.

In addition, elections will be held to select students as candidates for statewide BSU officers. Those officers will be selected at a state BSU meeting in May at the University of California, Riverside.