Ala. Attor

By Douglas B. Washington Post Stationer MONTGOMENY, ALL MONTGOMENY, ALL It was more than it rears ago that a bomb similar through the 15th Street me tist Church in Birming or and tist Church in Birminnie and killed four black glob Sunday school. To this dia no one has been tailetsd.

Bill Barley is brying to change that. At 34, he has been Alabama's attorney general for six years. He is the son of a southeastern Alabama Circuit Court judge and a graduate of the University of Alabama law school. He is a strong Demo-cratic contender to success George C. Wallsce.as governor in 1978.

"I want to solve" the De minghant binnbing, basis said in an interview black cently, "and I there a shocking the centry with

"He is an extraordiantly good attorney in the courtroom," said Robert S. Vance, state Democratic Party chairman, and a Birmingham attorney. It is the gift—the prosecut's in-stinct and flair. And there's a tougn one, he goes into court himself. It's he mingham attorney. "He has

neok on the Dise, not said "He's taken the steel in-

dustry and the mining own-panies head-on on environ-mental issues, said Vane-"Industry expects goturn-ment official to be made at them, and backet has the ways been new. It may hurt him if he runs for governor and doesn't have that any port."

"He's got a hair-trigger temper," said sucher, more nearly neutral, state paidle cal observer." The occasion-ally says things that are a little erratic as doesn't al-ways give the impression of one could be one coolly in control. But Baxley is truly a man of earnest conviction the still has a sense of outrage in this guited use. The bombing of the lare

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He reopened in 1971' a hour domain the sheather of the bombings His chief investigator. Such Shame and four others began build ing' leads and suching sources in search that took them to at least two other Southern states and into the

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mysteries of the Ku Klux Klan.

"Klan-related groups and a few other little nut groups A lew other fittle fut groups were behind all the racial violence in the Bauth back in Hane days" Backy sold. "These was an control plan-ning like is a Pennagon-type war right. We like had really in detogometer collec-tion of depois and ligots, most of whom were Dretty soury and on the fringe of the law anyony. The shame of it this that good people didn't speak up to stop the atomises that hese goons and thugs were going around dping: Barley, claims, to know who howsheet the Birming-ham charder the Will not discuss propects. In January, as the investiwere behind all the racial

In January, as the investi-ation began to warm up, Extense people were subpor-need and interrogated, and news of Banley's parsecret drobe leaked in the Hir-pingham newspapers.

wwwere making much more progress before it got out," Bacley said, "and I what there was some way it. (the leak) had never has pened." The advantage of surprise was gone, he said. Baxley is a bachelor and his office reflects a bachelor's clutter. There are only two free chairs, a divan and piled with legal documents; correspondence and other paper. The portraits of five Presidents-Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D. Rooseyelt, Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson are arranged on One wall. "Men I admire," he said.

If he had to make the decision today, "I would say I'd probably make a run" for governor, he said. "But whatever Bappens, I'm going to get out of politics by the time I'm 40. I can't think of anything worse than waking up one morning when I'm 63 dr Af years old and find that some voing guy has beat me one Pre got no place to go. I don't think it's going to be the end if I get beat."

He wasn't six months out of law school before he won cleases a district prose-cutor in southeastern Alathe state of the second introduces of resignations of resignations of resignations of the second with accepting bribes or with subsets of office. The the purper of Jefferson County (Herningham) was convicted of accepting The president of the commission was convisied on a bribery charge. Three Circuit Court tierks were convicted of various offenses.

Gov. Wallare, according to Baxiey and several others familiar with Alabama government, has not interfered in Baxley's pursuits.

One of those pursuits has been the investigation of a 19-year-old case—the fleath of Willie Edwards Ir, a black truck driver. Balley charges that on the night of Jan. 23, 1957, Edwards was forced at gunpaint by some Klansmen to jump 40 feet from a highway bridge to the Alabama River below.

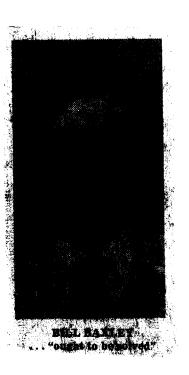
Edwards' body was found three months later along the riverbank in Montgomery. Now, Baxley is seeking firstdegree murder indictments of three men he says took part in that incident. His case is based in part on the testimony of former Klansman Raymond Britt, who says he was a witness and who has been granted immunity.

In March, murder indictments were returned against William (Sonny) Kyle Livingston Jr., 38, James York, 73, and Henry Alexander, 46.

But the indictments were thrown out April 14 by Circuit Court Judge Frank B. Embry because, he said, Baxley had not demonstrated whether Edwards died from drowning or from a fall and had not proven that a crime had been committed.

That same day, Livingston was taking a polygraph examination in New York. The results, Baxley and defense attorney Boyle Fuller had agreed, would be admitted as evidence in further proceedings. Livingston "passed all the tests," Fuller said. Livingston calls witness Britt "a liar."

Embry later refused to reinstate the indictments;



however, prosecutors, plan to seek new ones against all three men.

"This is no problem," said Baxley. "It means a two- or three-month delay after 19 years."

Baxley is convinced that his pursuit of old civil rights cases has not hurt him with Alabama's policement and state troopers, whom he regards as a source of political strength.

Policemen feel that "when they make an arrest, Baxley will prosecute," said Tom Smiley, secretary of the Alabama Law Enforcement Officers Association. The association honored. Baxley as its "outstanding lawman" of 1973.

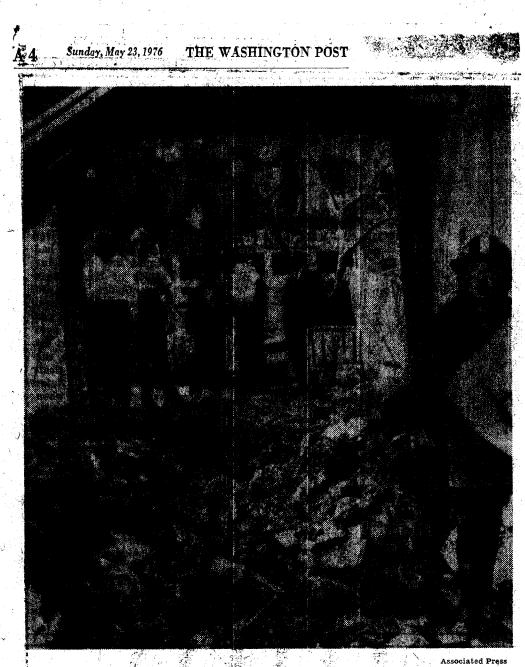
Baxley favors the death penalty, a shift from his college days. The conversion came during the short period of time he was in private practice. He was appointed to defend a man charged with the armed robbery of a convenience store, an offense then punishable by death in Alabama.

"I talked to my client, and he told me one thing, then another," Baxley said. "I was young, and after three or four wild goose chases I realized he was lying to me. So I told him he could get the electric chair and suddenly, we had our first meaningful conversation." "I became convinced the.

death penalty was a deterrent. The reason he didn't shoot that store clerk was not because of his comparsion for openal life, it was because be was able was be observed by was able was be observed by was able was be observed by was able was be able the cost benefit of a shot the cost benefit of other laws was been in the shid "and that force was the shid "and that force it was be other laws out the start we throw out the start in the cost was been in the shid "and that force it was been able to be been in the shid "and that force it was been able to be been in the shid "and that force it was been able to be been in the shid of the for the been in the of the for the been was been duestions on which been been disagree, Arrington said Arrington is one of three blacks on Shittinghan's mine-member City Council

In January, Arrington infroduced a resolution calling for a full-acels conneil investigation of the church bombing in 1965. To was the only black member is vote for the resolution, which failed 7 to 2.

"The city government has always been subpliciously quiet on this." Arrington said, ... and it was obvibus (at the time of the bombings) that either the had the sorriest police department or there was some police collusion. The fact that Bill Barley is conducting an investigation means a lot to me. If a case can still the made, he'll make it."



Associated Press Rubble-filled crater in church where four black girls died during '63 bombing.



Tyler Goodwin Bridge, from which Willie Edwards Jr. allegedly was forced to jump.