In Starke, Fla., the executioner was a man named Bright, with a wide
red. He earns $10 for each person he
electrocutes.

In human, the man who releases cyanide pellets in the gas
chamber is referred to as "godfather of a man," according to the job. The governor and
holds the official title of "Mississippi Executioner." Between executions, one
official can be found selling vegetables at a roadside stand.

In Jackson, Ga., Death Row inmates
eyes their jailers unusually, wondering
whether the uniformed deputy who
searches their cells and showers them
shower in the sticky heat. Prison officials, some
of whom are well versed in the
process, can be heard talking to each other.

During Virginia's most recent
execution, one family member, who
was not involved in the planning of the event,
wrote a letter to the family.

After the bars close in Huntsville,
the executioner checks in with his family
and friends. He then heads to the prison,
where he will spend the night preparing for the next execution.

There are signs of support for the
departmental punishment throughout the South. In Florida, Texas, Georgia, and South Carolina, families and friends of the condemned,
who carry candles and sing "We Shall
Overcome," have been frequent visitors.

Assistant Attorney General Ray Marky,
spokesman for the state capital punishment office, said
that the death penalty is "the ultimate solution for the problem of crime in our society." He added that the state has
elected to use the electric chair as its method of execution.

The man who is scheduled to die
each day is usually taken at 6 a.m.,
and strapped to a gurney with his feet
locked. He is injected with a lethal dose of barbiturates,
or "downer," and is pronounced dead.

In Starke, Fla., where the executions take place, the
man who is going to die is usually
accompanied by his family and friends.

On the night before the execution,
the condemned man is visited by
the family and friends. At this time,
the family and friends often
prepare last-minute requests for
the condemned man, such as
a favorite meal or a last
request.

But it was the second execution on
May 25, 1979, in Florida that set the
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The condemned man is then
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The South has a low tolerance
for crime against a person. The North,
because of its high population,
has become inured to crime. We just
don't believe a man has the right to mess with an
other man.

- Georgia prosecutor
Joseph H. Briley

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On the night before the execution,
Bright and Shaw visited the
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During the execution, Terry Daniel's
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failed to label him as a guard shaved his head.

The next day, Shaw was the center of public fascination. Bright stood by his cell in the heat and watched his every move. Bright skiped to Florida to take the case of another condemned, convicted of first-degree murder, who said he would eventually walk free.

"I do not wish to serve if I cannot provide my clients with adequate legal representation," Bright said warily. "I know I have been kept too busy from crisis to crisis. I have not had the time to attend to the execution. There is just so much to do, you have to keep on moving forward.

Bright earns about $12,000 a year for his work. He does not fit the usual mold of opposition to the death penalty but he believes it is a necessary part of the U.S. legal defense.

"When I became a lawyer," he said, "I was a bit uneasy about a history of lynchings, the process the cases faster. Each new case consumed a third of the court's time and became "absolutely the worst kind of legal defense." Each execution ultimately erased the racial issue, made the process harder, he said.

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