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JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT
YOUTH DETENTION CENTER INVESTIGATION
Jackson
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THE JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT IS CONDUCTING AN ON-GOING INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGATIONS OF CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WHICH OCCURRED AT THE CITY'S YOUTH DETENTION CENTER. THE INVESTIGATION INVOLVES A WIDE VARIETY OF CRIMES WHICH RANGE FROM RAPES OF YOUNG GIRLS INSIDE THE FACILITY TO MURDERS WHICH OCCURRED AWAY FROM THE FACILITY.

THE INVESTIGATION BEGAN WHEN FRANK BLUNSTON, FORMER MANAGER OF THE JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT YOUTH DETENTION CENTER, WAS CITED FOR A SERIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE VIOLATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES, WHICH RANGED FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF AN EMPLOYEE TO DISOBEYING POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICIES. (SEE ATTACHMENTS 1 & 2.) THESE CHARGES RESULTED IN BLUNSTON BEING TRANSFERRED TO THE ADULT DETENTION CENTER.

AFTER BLUNSTON'S TRANSFER, CHILDREN WHO WERE CONFINED AT THE YOUTH DETENTION CENTER AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CENTER COMPLAINED THAT BLUNSTON HAD BEEN MADE AWARE OF AND MAY HAVE PARTICIPATED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES AT THE CENTER INVOLVING THE DETAINED CHILDREN, THEIR PARENTS (SEE ATTACHMENT 3.), LOCAL POLITICIANS AND OTHER PROMINENT RESIDENTS OF JACKSON. AS THE INVESTIGATION INTENSIFIED, BLUNSTON RESIGNED FROM HIS POSITION AND FOUR MEMBERS OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT WERE ARRESTED. (SEE ATTACHMENT 4.) INVESTIGATORS ALSO DISCOVERED THAT SEVERAL YEARS EARLIER, BEFORE BLUNSTON HELD THE POSITION OF YOUTH DETENTION CENTER MANAGER, HE WAS INVOLVED IN A BRIBERY SCHEME AT THE CENTER AND WAS NOT CHARGED CRIMINALLY. (SEE ATTACHMENT 5.) INSTEAD, BLUNSTON WAS SUSPENDED FOR 30 DAYS WITHOUT PAY. SOMETIME THEREAFTER HE WAS PROMOTED TO THE POSITION OF MANAGER OF THE CENTER.

AS MORE INFORMATION SURFACED, IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT THE COMPLAINANTS BELIEVED THAT BLUNSTON WAS INVOLVED IN SEVERAL CRIMES OR HAD KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR OCCURRENCES WITHOUT TAKING ANY ACTION. (SEE ATTACHMENT 6.) INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM INTERVIEWS AND SUPPORTED BY DOCUMENTATION ALSO INDICATED THAT BLUNSTON WAS CONNECTED TO AT LEAST ONE DOCUMENTED CASE WHERE PROPERTY WAS STOLEN FROM A RESPONDENT WHO WAS DETAINED AT THE CENTER. FURTHER INFORMATION FROM THE SAME SOURCES INDICATED THAT BLUNSTON HAD CLOSE PERSONAL TIES WITH HINDS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY ED PETERS AND THAT NONE OF THE CASES INVOLVING POLICE PERSONNEL WOULD BE PROSECUTED.

AFTER SHARING THE ABOVE INFORMATION WITH THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY AND THE JACKSON FIELD OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS, THE JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT REQUESTED A FEDERAL GRAND JURY AND INVESTIGATIVE ASSISTANCE. MORE THAN TEN (10) MONTHS PASSED AND NUMEROUS ATTEMPTS WERE MADE BY JACKSON POLICE DETECTIVES TO ENCOURAGE PROSECUTORS TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE CASES, WITHOUT SUCCESS.

DURING THE LATTER PART OF JULY 1993, JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT DETECTIVES WERE PERUSING A ROUTINE REPORT WHICH WAS DISSEMINATED BY THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE. AN ENTRY ON THE REPORT INDICATED THAT ONE OF THE CASES [REDACTED] HAD BEEN DISMISSED BY THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE. THE CASE WAS DISMISSED ON MAY 5, 1993, AND JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT DETECTIVES NEVER WERE NOTIFIED, CONSULTED OR ADVISED THAT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WAS REQUIRED TO PROSECUTE THE CASE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE PROSPECT OF CONNECTING BLUNSTON WITH A CRIME AND

POLICE EMPLOYEES WHO ALREADY HAVE BEEN CHARGED WAS SEVERELY REDUCED.

ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY, JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT DETECTIVES LEARNED THAT BLUNSTON HAD BEEN HIRED AS A FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE ON THE STAFF OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY ED PETERS. BY VIRTUE OF HIS EMPLOYMENT WITH THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BLUNSTON HAS ACCESS TO COURT FILES AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS. THE CASES IN WHICH BLUNSTON IS A PRIMARY TARGET ARE CONTAINED IN THOSE FILES. BLUNSTON REMAINS UNDER ACTIVE INVESTIGATION BY THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN CONNECTION WITH THE YOUTH DETENTION CENTER INVESTIGATION.

OTHER ALLEGATIONS RELATED TO THIS INVESTIGATION ARE CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS THAT INVOLVE FRANK MELTON, PRESIDENT OF NBC TELEVISION AFFILIATE WLBT; FRANK BLUNSTON AND HINDS COUNTY YOUTH COURT JUDGES. YOUNG BOYS COMPLAINED THAT THEY WERE SEXUALLY MOLESTED BY MELTON AFTER THEY WERE PLACED IN HIS CUSTODY BY YOUTH COURT JUDGES AND BLUNSTON. MELTON WAS NOT A CERTIFIED FOSTER PARENT AND TOOK CUSTODY OF THE YOUNG BOYS IN VIOLATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' POLICY GUIDELINES.

A REVIEW OF POLICE FILES AND INTERVIEWS WITH POLICE DETECTIVES REVEAL THAT SEVERAL PERSONS WHO HAD DIRECT CONTACT WITH MELTON AND WERE INVOLVED IN THIS OVERALL INVESTIGATION HAVE BEEN KILLED OR HAVE DISAPPEARED. AT LEAST TWO OF THESE PERSONS PROVIDED INFORMATION ABOUT MELTON AND THE LIBERTIES THAT HE HAD TAKEN WITH YOUNG BOYS BEFORE THEY WERE SHOT AND KILLED.

A FILE SEARCH WAS CONDUCTED IN THE JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT RECORDS SECTION TO LOCATE THE OFFICIAL POLICE INVESTIGATION. IT

WAS DETERMINED AFTER THE SEARCH THAT THE ENTIRE FILE IN WHICH MELTON WAS NAMED HAD BEEN STOLEN.

OTHER INFORMATION INDICATES THAT MANY OTHER PERSONS CONNECTED WITH MELTON HAVE BEEN KILLED. HOWEVER, THE REASONS FOR THE DEATHS ARE SPECULATIVE AT THIS TIME.

OTHER ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING THESE SAME PRINCIPALS ARE RELATED TO BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THESE ALLEGATIONS REMAIN UNDER INVESTIGATION.

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