



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2007

FOUR GRATERFORD PRISON GUARDS CHARGED IN EXTORTION AND DRUG SMUGGLING SCHEMES

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Pat Meehan today announced the filings of indictments and an information¹ against five individuals charged in separate cases. Tony Strong, Allen Littles, Sheri Allen, and Ronald S. Smith are charged with smuggling contraband to prisoners while they were working as guards with the State Correctional Institution at Graterford. According to the indictment, the defendants were receiving payments and/or drugs in exchange for supplying inmates with heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and cellular telephone devices. Defendant Howard Grant, who is not a prison guard, is charged in the indictment against Ronald S. Smith. Grant is alleged to have supplied some of the drugs that were taken into the prison and the drugs that were used to pay some of the guards. According to the indictment, Grant also is charged with supplying drugs to an individual who Grant believed was aiding an inmate, a convicted murderer, in an escape attempt. The escape was unsuccessful. The time of the offenses alleged in the charging documents ranged from 2001 through February 2007.

“There is no ambiguity in the policies and procedures of the prison system. Every guard knows the rules,” said Meehan. “The indictments today allege that for a few dollars these guards violated the rules and the trust placed in them by both prison officials and the taxpayers of Pennsylvania.”

Secretary of Corrections Jeffrey A. Beard stated, “We have a responsibility to the public to operate secure prisons, and to the staff and inmates to operate safe prisons. The actions of a few employees cannot and will not be permitted to jeopardize the security or safety of our prisons. I greatly appreciate the U.S. Attorney, the FBI, and the State Police for working with us to rid SCI-Graterford of these corrupt employees.”

Jody Weis, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Philadelphia Division states, "There are few things more detrimental to our justice system than the betrayal of those who are sworn to guard the laws and the occupants of our federal, state, and local prisons. The officers wearing the Department of Corrections uniform should be enforcing the rules, not breaking them."

As part of this long-term investigation, the following also were charged and have been convicted: Daphne Nedab, a former corrections officer at Graterford Prison, charged in January 2007 with insurance fraud; Charles Bob, a former Graterford Prison corrections officer charged in 2002 with attempting to distribute drugs at another prison facility.

¹ An indictment or an information is an accusation; every criminal defendant is presumed to be innocent, unless and until proven guilty.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

| NAME | ADDRESS | AGE |
|-----------------|--------------|-----|
| Tony Strong | Philadelphia | 46 |
| Allen Littles | Philadelphia | 37 |
| Sheri Allen | Philadelphia | 38 |
| Ronald S. Smith | Philadelphia | 51 |
| Howard L. Grant | Philadelphia | 37 |

The defendants face the following charges and maximum penalties:

| DEFENDANT | CHARGES | MAXIMUM PENALTY |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Tony Strong | Extortion, 1 count Attempted distribution of controlled substances, 1 count | 40 years imprisonment \$1.25m fine |
| Allen Littles | Extortion, 1 count Conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, 1 count | 40 years imprisonment \$1.25m fine |
| Sheri Allen | Extortion, 1 count Attempted distribution of controlled substances, 1 count | 40 years imprisonment \$1.25m fine |
| Ronald S. Smith | Extortion, 1 count Conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, 1 count Distribution of controlled substances, 1 count Distribution of controlled substances near a school, 1 count | 40 years imprisonment \$1.25m fine |
| Howard L. Grant | Conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, 2 counts Distribution of controlled substances, 2 counts Distribution of controlled substances near a school, 1 count | 30 years imprisonment \$1.5m fine |

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, and the Pennsylvania State Police, and has been assigned to Assistant U.S. Attorney Louis. D. Lappen

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