



U.S. Department of Justice

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ANOTHER PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS VERDICT: **JURY FINDS PINE BLUFF FELON GUILTY OF MULTIPLE COUNTS**

Little Rock - U.S. Attorney Bud Cummins announced today that a jury in United States District Court returned a guilty verdict in the case of Pierre Bell, 38, of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Bell was convicted on three counts: 1) possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine, 2) possession of a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime and 3) being a felon in possession of a firearm. The Honorable George Howard, Jr., United States District Court judge, presided over the trial which began on March 15.

Bell was arrested on November 4, 2004, in Pine Bluff after officers of the Pine Bluff Police Department and the Tri-County Drug Task Force executed a search warrant at a Pine Bluff residence. During the search, officers found over seven grams of crack cocaine and a .38 caliber revolver. After being Mirandized, Bell gave a statement admitting possession of the drugs and the gun found during the search. According to the indictment, Bell was previously convicted of possession of marijuana with intent to deliver in Lincoln County and possession of cocaine in Jefferson County.

"This case is yet another excellent example of one brought federally as a result of the partnership established between federal law enforcement officials and the law enforcement officials in Jefferson County through Project Safe Neighborhoods. Jefferson County Prosecuting Attorney Stevan Dalrymple was our first Project Safe Neighborhoods partner, and he has been our most committed partner as well," stated Cummins. "We are continuing to aggressively pursue criminals who mix guns and drugs. They are a plague on the community, and if we can prosecute them federally and get them more prison time without parole, that is just what we are going to do."

Bell faces a maximum sentence of not less than 10 years in federal prison, a \$4,000,000 fine, or both on the crack cocaine count; not more than ten years in federal prison, a \$250,000 fine or both on the felon in possession with a firearm count; and **not less than five years consecutive** to any other sentence on the possession of a firearm while drug trafficking count. There is no parole in the federal sentencing system. The actual sentence will be determined by the Court at a later date in consultation with the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

Assistant United States Attorney John Ray White prosecuted the case which was investigated by Pine Bluff Police Department, the Tri-County Drug Task Force, and the United States Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms.

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