

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF FLORIDA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF DADE

FALL TERM A. D. 1956

FINAL REPORT OF THE GRAND JURY

Filed

May 14, 1957

Circuit Judge Presiding

RAY H. PEARSON

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TO THE HONORABLE RAY H. PEARSON, CIRCUIT JUDGE
OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

We, the Grand Jury, in and for Dade County, Florida, for the 1956 Fall Term of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, present this our Final Report.

On November 13, 1956, we were impaneled by the Honorable Ray H. Pearson, Circuit Judge. The Grand Jury held fifty four official meetings of the full body, and the various committees met at regular and frequent appointed times to facilitate the work.

A list of capital and other criminal cases considered by the Fall Term 1956 Grand Jury is presented herewith, indicating the action taken thereon:

<u>Defendant</u>	<u>Charge</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>
ALLEN WINSTON HENDRICKS	First Degree Murder	True Bill
RAVERNELL COPE	First Degree Murder	True Bill
ERVING JOHNSON	Rape	True Bill
EVA MAE BECKOM	First Degree Murder	True Bill
LEONARD PARRISH	First Degree Murder	True Bill
ISAAC BATTLE	Second Degree Murder	True Bill
EDDIE UDELL	Rape	True Bill
CHARLIE WINFIELD	First Degree Murder	True Bill
LESLIE EDWARD McCLURE	First Degree Murder (3 Counts)	True Bill
PATRICK JOYCE		
VICTORIA GAIL THOMPSON	First Degree Murder	True Bill
WALTER PETER COGGINS III	First Degree Murder	True Bill
NATHANIEL McCOLLUM	First Degree Murder	True Bill
NORMAN BRADLEY	Assault & Battery (2 Indictments)	True Bill
ANNA SCHROEDER	First Degree Murder	True Bill
JOHN WILLIAMS	First Degree Murder	True Bill
JOHN GIBBY	Rape	True Bill
JESS PAIT	First Degree Murder	True Bill

<u>Defendant</u>	<u>Charge</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>
JORGE LUGO PEREZ	First Degree Murder	True Bill
CRESENSIO DIAS MERCADO	First Degree Murder	True Bill
JAMES H. RICHARDSON	First Degree Murder	True Bill
CHARLES LEE STREETS	Rape	True Bill
JAMES DAVID WILLIAMS	First Degree Murder	True Bill
RUDOLPH VALENTINO HERRING	Rape	True Bill

INQUIRY FROM TWO MEMBERS OF THE DADE COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

This Grand Jury issued several Interim Reports, among which was the report of March 12, 1957.

This report was issued as a result of a request from two members of the Dade County Delegation to the House of Representatives to reopen the Circuit Court investigation.

In view of the Supreme Court's decision of February 27, 1957, this body felt that there was no need to bring an indictment of any public official subject to impeachment if there was evidence available to the Legislature of his unfitness for duty.

All relevant and pertinent records of the Grand Jury have been released by Petition and Order to the Land Committee for their use in determining whether or not impeachment proceedings will be instituted.

DADE COUNTY ELECTIONS

This Grand Jury in an Interim Report dated March 19, 1957, dealt with the last general election in Dade County, and made many recommendations to the State Legislature and County officials.

We feel that if these recommendations are followed, the reoccurrence of the confusion at the polls and the failure of the average voter to conveniently exercise his prerogative to vote can be eliminated and corrected.

CHARGES BEFORE THE CIVIL SERVICE BOARD

On April 26, 1957, this Grand Jury presented an Interim Report in Open Court with respect to the processes and proceedings in matters affecting charges heard before the Miami Civil Service Board. In this report, we supported our findings and recommendations by use, as case histories, of the Matter of Police Captain Chester S. Eldredge and the Matter of Police Officer Alexander McDowell. Shortly after public announcement of this report, Police Chief Walter E. Headley appeared

on a local television program and challenged any representative of this Grand Jury to public debate on television on our report. This Grand Jury believes that Chief Headley knows full well that he can move to expunge our report, or any part of it, from the Court Records. In such case, he will have his public debate before the Circuit Court, where such a debate belongs.

INSPECTIONS OF CONVALESCENT AND NURSING HOMES

Inspections have been made of the various nursing and convalescent homes in Dade County. The following conditions were found at the time of our inspection:

There are at present fifty-three homes in Dade County which accept either nursing, convalescent or a combination of these type patients. These homes are licensed by the State of Florida in one or both of these categories and are subject to inspection by the Florida State Health Department, plus fire and other local inspections. A majority of these homes were inspected.

Upon inspection, it was found in many cases the homes visited failed to meet the minimum standards as established by the State Board of Health. It was noted, however, that nearly all of the homes visited showed indications of recent changes and general clean-up.

Two of the homes visited were considered unacceptable entirely. Since the inspection of the homes, the Dade County Department of Welfare ordered the removal of all county patients from one of these homes. The Dade County Department of Public Welfare also notified the two homes, considered unacceptable entirely, to meet the minimum standards or be closed.

The licensing of these homes in Dade County is a function which falls under the Dade County Public Health Unit. That office is charged with the responsibility for inspecting and licensing nursing and convalescent homes, according to the Florida Statutes. The law provides that all homes in operation on July 1, 1953, were to be given a reasonable time, not to exceed one year, to comply with minimum standards as established by the Florida Statutes, and the Florida State Board of Health.

The Florida Statutes state several reasons upon which a license may be denied and several upon which a license may be revoked. All licenses granted under the statute expire on December 31, after the date of issue. Further, applications must be filed with the County Health Officer at least ten days prior to the expiration of the license.

The law further provides that the opening or operation of a nursing home without a license shall be a misdemeanor and each days violation shall constitute a separate offense. Our investigation brought to light the fact that one year after July 1, 1953, long since past, some homes in Dade County are still below minimum standards as established by the Florida State Board of Health. This was originally caused by a shortage of patient bed space and perhaps it would have been extremely difficult to have closed any home at that time.

Periodic inspections of all homes in Dade County are conducted by the Public Health Unit of the State of Florida, Department of Public Health, and are accomplished by three teams, each consisting of a county nurse and sanitation inspector, whose responsibility is to insure that all rules, regulations, and minimum standards are met by the homes.

The Dade County Department of Public Welfare is the agency in charge of the placement of welfare patients in the Dade County Nursing and Convalescent Homes. It would appear from our inspections that all placement responsibility falls within the sole discretion of two of the placement divisions; convalescent homes and psychiatric placement. One of the strongest criticisms against the Dade County Department of Public Welfare is the lack of cooperation with the State Health Department. We could not find evidence of regular staff meetings held by the Dade County Department of Public Welfare to discuss divisional problems or coordination.

We make the following recommendations:

1. That the Dade County Department of Public Welfare require a complete investigation of all applicants before granting a nursing and/or convalescent home

license, as provided by rules and regulations for nursing homes in the State of Florida.

2. That periodic inspections of all homes in Dade County be continued and that inspection teams be rotated frequently but not less than every three months, including night inspections.

3. That inspectors be required to submit a copy of a check list type report (based on the minimum standards), on each home inspected, to the Dade County Welfare Department along with a copy of the full comment sheet which goes to the home operator.

4. That the law pertaining to nursing and convalescent homes be more strictly enforced.

5. Since many of the homes are of frame construction, special attention should be given by the Fire Departments of the County and Municipalities to see that the fire and safety regulations are strictly enforced.

6. That closer cooperation be obtained between the Dade County Unit of the State Health Department and the Dade County Department of Public Welfare, which would tend to enforce control of the homes more effectively.

7. That serious consideration be given by the County Commissioners to authorize the construction of a hospital or home where county welfare patients could be admitted. When it is considered that over a half million dollars was spent in 1956 in payment to nursing and convalescent homes for county welfare patients, it is believed that such a county hospital or home would be much more economical to maintain and would result in greater efficiency in operation.

PUBLIC ROADS

We have investigated the paving of certain roads and streets in Dade County to determine why construction work was under way for such long periods of time and why certain roads, which were practically new, were torn up for the installation of drainage systems, resulting in the expenditure of additional funds of taxpayers' money

Our investigation particularly concerned Northwest and Northeast 54th Street, Northwest 7th Avenue, Northwest 27th Avenue, and South Dixie Highway (U.S. #1).

(a) Merchants along these thoroughfares have been greatly inconvenienced and have, in many instances, sustained financial losses due to the inability of the public to have access to their businesses for such a great length of time while these projects were under construction.

(b) We know that it is impossible to pursue such projects as enumerated above without some inconvenience to the public. Inspection of the contracts involved revealed that the contractors completed their work within their allotted time.

(c) Mention has been made that the Sunshine State Parkway, which is 108 miles in length, was started and completed while the 54th Street projects were still under way. Comparison of these projects is unjust as the problems involved were entirely different. For instance, the Sunshine State Parkway traversed almost virgin country where no storm or sanitary sewers, underground electrical work, telephones or water mains, curb or gutter work, nor various utility problems were involved. Neither was it necessary to keep traffic flowing. On the other hand, in the roads within Dade County mentioned above which caused so much concern to the merchants involved, practically all of the hindrances mentioned above were present. The preliminary work, such as underground sewers, curb and gutter, etc. which precedes actual paving, could not be done at the same time.

(d) With particular reference to Northwest 27th Avenue, this street was widened, paved, and put into operation about two years ago at a tremendous cost to the taxpayers. Drainage was attempted by means of sub-surface wells at low spots along the route, contrary to local engineering advice. Immediately after the first heavy rain, it was found that this system was not adequate to handle the water. It has been our information that the system of drainage used at first was done in the interest of economy. We believe that such a line of reasoning was false economy as it was necessary to destroy some of the new paving for a distance of almost one mile in

order to install adequate storm sewers. This was done, of course, at additional expense. We believe that the State Road Department engineers, with information which was certainly available to them concerning drainage in this area, erred in their judgment, in not knowing that the drainage system first installed would not be adequate.

It is our duty to call this matter to the public's attention and make the following recommendations:

(1) That the State Road Department not allow such a long period of time for completion of projects likely to cause great financial loss to merchants and property owners along the route.

(2) That the contractors work in closer harmony with the merchants so the public and the merchants will not suffer such undue hardships in the construction of streets and roads.

DISPOSITION OF SALVAGE MATERIAL

An inquiry has been made into the sale of salvage rags by the Dade County Waste Department and the City of Miami Division of Municipal Wastes.

It has been determined that since January 1953 the Dade County Waste Department has allowed one contractor to have exclusive rights to the purchase of over 1 1/4 million pounds of rags per year at a price of 2¢ per pound to the laborers collecting these rags and 1/4¢ per pound to the county. There is no written contract in existence and no opportunity for competitive bidding has ever been given.

Investigation has determined that the market price for mixed rags has been 3¢ per pound for several years.

On April 1, 1957, the Dade County Waste Department recommended to the County Commission that bids be advertised for a buyer on a per pound basis with the contract being awarded to the highest bidder.

With regard to the City of Miami, Division of Municipal Wastes, they have a written contract obtained by competitive bidding, which the contractor agrees to

purchase mixed rags at 3.02¢ per pound and posts a bond to guarantee performance. Out of this, the laborers who collect the rags receive 2¢ per pound.

However, the rag dealer who has the contract makes a practice of segregating part of these rags which he designates as "roofing," and pays less for this type, despite the fact that the contract calls for all mixed rags, and mixed rags by trade definition, contain "roofing." When this "roofing" is removed, the remaining rags would be classified as "graded rags" and command a much higher price.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Board of County Commissioners follow up on the request of the Waste Department and advertise for bids as soon as possible.
2. That the City of Miami, Division of Municipal Wastes, take steps to enforce compliance with the terms of their contract, and discontinue the practice of allowing "roofing" to be separated from the mixed rags.

BOLITA

One of the items of illegal activity in this area is the sale of Bolita. This has been going on for many years and it is our opinion that Bolita is still active and the law prohibiting it is inadequately enforced. Illegal gambling will never be eliminated as long as there exists that element of human nature who live by gambling and the failure of officers to enforce the law.

This Jury is much concerned in the matter and has spent many hours investigating the situation. We employed investigators to determine if Bolita could easily be purchased. They furnished us with confirming evidence. With this information in our possession, we contacted the Miami Police Department and the County Sheriff's Department, two of the law enforcement agencies responsible for the suppression of these illegal activities in their respective jurisdictions; each were furnished names and addresses of places where we had evidence that Bolita was being sold. We requested that immediate action be taken and report to us the results.

It is indeed most disappointing that in 25 cases, the Sheriff's Department reported success in only 5; the Miami Police Department reported success in 9 of their 20 cases.

MIAMI BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

This Grand Jury investigated alleged irregularities concerning the Identification Bureau of the Miami Beach Police Department, and in the course of the investigation, we studied the methods and procedures of the operations of this department.

We ascertained that the Identification Bureau of the Miami Beach Police Department maintains no permanent record reflecting the name and date of an individual officer of the department who removes a file; therefore, the Police Department cannot at any time determine what person or persons have seen a particular file. Also, we found that the personnel of the Police Department have unrestricted access to the Identification Files, without any control or supervision by anyone in charge of the department.

The above findings came to light when a complaint was received by this Grand Jury concerning the criminal file of an alleged big time bookmaker arrested on Miami Beach. The only part of said file still intact is the fingerprint index card. All other records of this criminal file, including the photograph and negative, have surreptitiously been removed.

In the same case, we found that the permanent records of this defendant were released to the Chief of Police without proper receipt, and upon the Chief calling for the records, the Identification people withdrew the original Identification number which the defendant first received, and subsequently another person received said defendant's original number. Not until the Chief returned the defendant's record did the Identification Bureau process these records and give the defendant a new Identification number.

All of the above facts, as to change in numbers, etc. would not have been apparent if it had not been for inquiries of several detectives interested in said case and disposition.

At the present time, the City officials of the City of Miami Beach are conducting an intensified investigation as to police procedures and irregularities. Because of this investigation, this Grand Jury did not take any further action. We urge the City Council of the City of Miami Beach to continue its investigation until it has been completed in the interest of good law enforcement on Miami Beach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a permanent record be maintained by the Identification Bureau of the City of Miami Beach, reflecting the name and date of an individual officer who removes a file in that department;
2. That the practice of permitting personnel of the Police Department to have unrestricted access to the Identification Bureau files cease immediately;
3. That before releasing any files to any person whomsoever, the Identification Bureau obtain a proper receipt;
4. That the Miami Beach Police Department conduct a thorough investigation as to the missing files referred to above.

BARBITURATES AND CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM STIMULANTS

This Grand Jury in an Interim Report dated March 28, 1957 advocated the passage of a Bill to control the use and sale of barbiturates and central nervous system stimulants. This proposed Bill is now before the State Legislature for approval or disapproval.

LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

This Grand Jury in an Interim Report dated April 2, 1957, stressed the need for additional legislation on the following matters:

Public Officials Signing Waivers of Immunity
Creation of a New Grand Jury Commission
Additional Stenographic Assistance in the Grand Jury Office

COURT REPORTERS

This Grand Jury recommended to the Florida Legislature that all official court reporters be qualified and licensed in the State of Florida in order that only qualified persons would be eligible to report official proceedings, and that court reporters preserve their stenographic and or stenotype notes for a period of two years.

We regret that the 1957 Florida State Legislature voted down a proposed Bill by this Grand Jury that court reporters be licensed and regulated. However, this Grand Jury feels that court reporters in all local courts should be required by a local court rule to file their stenographic and or stenotype notes with the Clerk of the Court, to be kept by him for the duration of the statute of limitations.

ROTATION OF CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES

This Grand Jury believes that rotation of Circuit Court Judges for the impaneling of the Grand Jury is a progressive step and should be made a local rule.

We have been informed that all local Circuit Judges are in accord with this suggestion.

PERSONNEL AND SALARIES OF THE STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

This Grand Jury recommended in an Interim Report dated March 26, 1957, that the State Attorney's Office be granted additional investigators and process servers, as well as three additional Assistant State Attorneys. Also, that the salary schedule for the State Attorney and his staff is inadequate to attract and retain competent men to insure good law enforcement in Dade County, as well as to adequately investigate rackets and frauds.

It is to be noted that the Dade-Miami Chamber of Commerce, the Dade County and Miami Beach Bar Associations, in addition to civic, fraternal, and other

organizations have urged upon the Dade County Delegation that the State Attorney's Office be given additional personnel, and that salaries should be increased.

MUNICIPAL JUSTICE BUILDING

This Grand Jury made an inspection of the new Municipal Justice Building located at 1145 N. W. 11th Street, Miami, Florida. It is our opinion that this building is too close to a residential section in that the Municipal Justice Building contains the City of Miami Jail and adjacent to the building is a motorcycle repair shop.

This Grand Jury finds that the City Commission of the City of Miami did not appropriate adequate funds to construct a building which would not only take care of our present, but future needs.

It is this Grand Jury's opinion that there are too many frills, decorations, covered walkways, keystone walks, brick veneered walls on the exterior of this building, thereby leaving insufficient funds to adequately construct the interior of the building.

We find that the jail space in the building is inadequate as numerous prisoners must sleep on the concrete floors. There have been several jail breaks since this building was constructed and this jury finds that certain construction features encourage these jail breaks.

There is not adequate provision for maximum security cells to house people such as suspected kidnappers, murderers, escapees, rapists, child molesters, and other exceedingly dangerous prisoners for a period of 24 hours or longer while their identities are checked through the F. B. I. files in Washington, D. C.

We find that there are inadequate interrogation rooms for police officers to do an efficient job. There is no place to interrogate witnesses and prisoners except in a room with other personnel. This Grand Jury also finds that no space was provided for a "police line-up room" which is considered very important in good police work.

This Grand Jury also finds that in the jail there is a room known as the "Drunk Tank" and the only way to clean this room is by flooding the floors with a hose. Due to faulty construction of the floor, the water leaks through to the Record Room below. Construction of the floors in the jail is such that they do not slope toward the drains in some rooms.

The ventilation system in the jail, in our opinion, is inadequate. Windows are so high and small that during the summer months unless proper ventilation is installed, the jail will be unbearable.

This Grand Jury finds a deplorable condition in the jail relating to the combination lavatories and drinking fountains which were installed. It is almost impossible for prisoners to drink from these fountains. The contractors have agreed with the City to replace these fixtures.

The Pistol Range north of the main building was inspected. We feel that an error was made in the planning of this pistol range inasmuch as six baffle plates of 1/4" steel were installed overhead at a sufficient angle to deflect bullets from the lights in the ceiling. These plates were about 3' wide and extended the entire width of the building which is about 20'. A terrific noise was generated by these overhead sheets of steel when a gun was fired. These plates were later dismantled and offered for sale as salvage.

At the time of our inspection, we found garbage cans and waste from the kitchen and other parts of the building piled high against the brick veneered wall on the inside court between the two wings of the building. Provision should have been made for such storage in a less conspicuous place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Miami City Commission give less consideration in the future to unnecessary decorations, etc., and more thought to the actual inside needs when planning future buildings. Consideration should be given to the planning for future needs of the city rather than for immediate needs. It is our opinion that the city's

policy of getting this type of construction completed hurriedly is not an economical course to pursue.

2. That there be closer coordination and cooperation between the City Commission, City Manager, heads of departments, architects, contractors, and builders in the future planning, construction and location of all municipal buildings.

3. In lieu of not being able to pinpoint the responsibility for design and construction of this building, we recommend that only one firm of architects be employed per building instead of the five firms of architects and engineers as were used in this instance.

CITY OF MIAMI STOCKADE
(Correction Center)

An inspection was made of the City of Miami Stockade, known as the Correction Center, located on Milam Dairy Road. The following conditions were found at the time of our inspection:

There are 20 acres of grounds, 10 acres of which are fenced in. Within the fenced enclosure are various buildings. All buildings, which were built in 1954, are of concrete block construction.

The present capacity is 750 prisoners and there were 550 prisoners incarcerated at the time of our inspection. The stockade was not built, nor was it intended to be a maximum security prison.

There is a modern dispensary which is presided over by registered nurses, sixteen hours a day. A medical doctor makes daily visits to the stockade. In the event of serious accident or sickness the prisoner is sent by ambulance to the Jackson Memorial Hospital for further treatment.

There are four matrons for the female prisoners. The female prisoners make their own uniforms and launder the personal clothing that is worn by the prisoners when they are admitted to the stockade.

Prisoners work on the roads, in the kitchen and on the city farms. There is a wood working shop, machine shop and tool shop. All of the beds are of good metal

construction and are made and painted by the prisoners. There is a modern kitchen and dining room. Several of the prisoners were eating their evening meal at the time of our inspection.

The meal consisted of good, wholesome quality food and the weekly menu that is posted on the wall of the dining room shows good planning insofar as nutritious meals are concerned. The dining room is used as a chapel on Sundays and other religious days. No prisoner is denied his right to worship regardless of his nationality, color or creed.

There are 36 guards and their starting salary is \$232.00 a month and graduates up to \$300.00 a month.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Captain William O'Connell be commended for the orderly and efficient manner in which he conducts the administration of the institution.

That the City Commissioners study the possibility of paying adequate salaries to insure the obtaining of qualified guards, thus, retaining the services of efficient men.

COUNTY JAIL

An inspection was made of the Dade County Jail, and we found the following conditions:

Our inspection included all jail facilities located in the Dade County Court House, most of the Sheriff's Department, and the Criminal Bureau of Investigation. We found everything neat and orderly, and believe that sufficient security measures are in effect so that no prisoners can escape without aid from the inside.

This Grand Jury observed the excellent facilities used by the Criminal Bureau of Investigation to solve crimes in Dade County.

We commend the personnel in the County Jail for the excellent work they are performing in connection with the administration of the jail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the County Commissioners give prompt and favorable consideration to the erection of a building of sufficient size to accommodate the Sheriff's Department, as well as prisoners.
2. That the Sheriff's Department endeavor to make some provision for prisoners who have been convicted to do some kind of useful work rather than spend their time idly playing cards and watching television.
3. That the Sheriff's Department endeavor to devise some means of segregating hardened criminals from those who are picked up for lesser charges, particularly the prisoners who are awaiting trial.

DADE COUNTY STOCKADE

An inspection was made of the Dade County Stockade located at 6100 Galloway Road. It was constructed in 1930 and has been under the supervision of the County Commissioners since that time. The following conditions were found at the time of our inspection:

This is an unusually well kept institution and cleanliness is the watchword. The Warden in charge, S. V. Sage, is to be highly commended for the efficient operation of the Stockade, despite an inadequate budget and insufficient personnel.

Prisoners at the Stockade are used for county road repair work, maintenance in the county parks, opening and closing of graves in the pauper cemetery, and operation of a laundry. All laundry for the County Jail and County Home and Hospital is done here at a considerable savings to the taxpayers. Conversation with the prisoners revealed that they had no complaints so far as the Warden and guards were concerned. We found Warden Sage most cooperative and certainly well qualified for his position.

We make the following recommendations:

1. That the County Commissioners give serious consideration to provide

an adequate budget for the operation of the County Stockade.

2. That the County Commissioners provide badly needed clerical help for the Warden.

3. Certain additions to the building would permit more efficient use of the present space. We recommend that the County Commissioners study the operation of the institution in relation to some presently unused space at the Stockade, with the view of authorizing such alterations and repairs found to be necessary.

4. Since it is difficult to obtain and keep experienced guards at the present low pay scale, it is recommended that the County Commissioners study the possibility of providing increased salaries for the guards.

5. Laundry work is performed for the County Jail, Home, and Hospital and the cost of same is charged as an operating expense of the Stockade. It is recommended that financial statements, when prepared, indicate that a certain amount of money was spent for laundry for the County Jail, Home and Hospital, and the operating cost of the Stockade be reduced in a like amount.

6. That the County Stockade continue under the supervision of the County Commissioners.

X

JUVENILE AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT

We commend the excellent work of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court and recommend that the Dade County Budget Commission give favorable consideration to Judge W. H. Beckham's request for funds to expand the services which would augment the excellent work being performed by our Juvenile Court.

DADE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

This Grand Jury has made an extensive study of the methods used in selecting candidates for promotion to the principal in the Dade County public school system.

We considered the functions of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Public

Instruction, and the Superintendent of Schools in hiring, promoting and transferring personnel.

We recommend that the next Grand Jury continue this study.

During our time in office, members of the jury visited Elementary, Junior and Senior High Schools throughout the area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The members of this Grand Jury wish to express their sincere gratitude and thanks to the Honorable Ray H. Pearson for his guidance during our term. We feel his counsel and advice which he so willingly rendered facilitated our work and deliberations. His specific charge at the beginning of our term gave direction to our body.

This Grand Jury has taken notice of the efficiency and devotion demonstrated by the present State Attorney, Richard E. Gerstein, and those of his Assistants who have been assigned to us as counsel and who have come before us in execution of their official duties. Their character and demeanor has disproved the too prevalent tendency to disparage with sweeping generalities the integrity of law enforcement officials and in some cases, the conduct of the courts. Their energy and initiative is in noteworthy contrast to the lethargy sometimes displayed by office holders shortly after their success at the polls.

In spite of the current, and we trust, temporarily limited means at his command, our State Attorney has taken vigorous action on his own motion to investigate and prosecute criminal situations to which his attention has been directed. Several such cases have recently been reported in the press and others are known to us to be in process. Such proceedings, in our opinion, will engender fear of prosecution and cause restraint from evil doing in underworld quarters, thereby tending to improve the moral climate of this community.

The legal knowledge and professional skill of this group has contributed measurably to the results of this Grand Jury's labors. We hope by this expression to acknowledge our appreciation of their cooperation.

This Grand Jury feels that we were especially fortunate to have the services of Assistant State Attorney Edward P. Swan whose knowledge and understanding of the Grand Jury system was of immeasurable assistance.

We believe that each Grand Jury receives special assistance and courtesy from E. B. Leatherman, Clerk of the Circuit Court, and his office staff.

It has been our privilege to receive this same consideration from Mr. E. B. Leatherman, and we wish to express our appreciation for his cooperation and assistance.

This Grand Jury wishes to express its thanks to the Jury's Administrative Assistant, Eleanor Robinson. Without her cooperation, our work would have been impossible. We compliment her as to her efficiency. As Administrative Assistant, Miss Robinson coordinated the work of the Grand Jury with all departments in the Court House in an efficient manner. Her conscientious and untiring work for this Grand Jury is deeply appreciated.

All meetings of the Grand Jury were opened with Invocation, and men of the Cloth of all faiths presided through the courtesy of the Greater Miami Council of Churches. We wish to express our sincere appreciation for the spiritual guidance and strength supplied us.

Respectfully submitted,


A. H. McGregor
Foreman

Attest: A. Elizabeth Watson
A. Elizabeth Watson
Clerk

Date: May 14, 1957