

HOUSE OF CARDS
by
William Ridenour

In April of 2014, The Sizzler newsletter published the article "Justice for All," in which Mr. Drexell Greene's experiences with the parole board were a featured topic. The sister of Mr. Greene sent a copy of that article and her cover letter to Ohio Senator Bill Seitz, requesting that he investigate her brother's recent parole hearing. Senator Seitz contacted the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction ("ODRC") and requested a report on Mr. Greene's case. The spokesperson for ODRC, Ms. Sara Andrews, wrote a report and sent it to Senator Seitz. Shortly thereafter, the report and a letter from Senator Seitz was sent to Mr. Greene's sister. In the pertinent part, the ODRC report states that:

"The Full Board Hearing for Greene was conducted on November 14, 2007. Greene was represented by the Ohio Public Defenders' Office. No family members or other supporters appeared on his behalf. [His sister] presents in her letter she was at the hearing and has knowledge of what transpired. Although she could have attended, she did not."

Mr. Greene's sister wrote another letter to Senator Seitz in response to Ms. Andrew's report and the allegation about her not attending the parole hearing. In her response letter to Senator Seitz, Mr. Greene's sister writes:

"I did in fact attend my brother's November 14, 2007 Full Board Hearing with [a representative from] the Ohio Public Defenders' Office. I have enclosed a sworn and notarized affidavit to that fact. Attached to my affidavit you will find the sign in sheets for my brother's 2007 parole board hearing. You will see that I was not only in attendance but I was a participant. I read a statement written by my brother to the victim's family and then I expressed my own sentiments. Moreover, I was filmed by a television camera crew when I was leaving the parole hearing. All of this information has been forwarded to the Chief Counsel and the Legislative Liaison for the Ohio Public Defenders' Office. I hope they will feel compelled to contact you concerning this matter."

Aside from the obvious questions raised by the prospect of an ODRC employee allegedly making false statements to family members of a prisoner and to an Ohio Senator concerning parole board actions, such statements also raise serious questions concerning violations of State law for making false statements during an official investigation. At this time, it is unknown whether Senator Seitz will tolerate such creative writing practices from ODRC employees. However, Mr. Greene's sister has indicated that she will not tolerate such false accusations and she has forwarded a copy of the alleged report and her response to Mr. Eric Holder, jr., United States Attorney General, for review and possible investigation.

Someone once said that when a house of cards is built upon a foundation of lies and deceit, it is weak and will ultimately come tumbling down. In a more notable quote: "He who permits himself to tell a lie once, finds it much easier to do a second and third time, 'til at length it becomes habitual; he tells lies without attending it, and truths without the world believing him." (Thomas Jefferson). Can we dare to hope that the end of this house of cards draws near?

[The author welcomes comments and opinions. He can be contacted through www.jpays.com, at William Ridenour #A134385]