

MURDER SUSPECT CRITICAL AFTER PLUNGE

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Saturday, August 16, 1997

Author: SUZANNE SIEGEL Free Press Staff Writer

Reco Jones, held in connection with the stabbing death of his girlfriend and four children, was in critical condition Friday as authorities investigated how he jumped or fell Thursday from a fifth-floor window at Detroit Police Headquarters.

Jones, 22, was on a ventilator and under suicide watch at Detroit Receiving, hospital officials said. Before he jumped, Jones made incriminating statements about his involvement in Wednesday's stabbing deaths of five people at a west side home.

Killed were Yolanda Bellamy, 24, and her two sons, Nathan Burns Jr., 5, and Nathan Burns III, 3; Bellamy's nephew, Delvontay Bellamy, 5, and niece, Shafontah Bellamy, 3.

Jones had been left alone and unhandcuffed in a homicide section interrogation room -- a breach of department policy -- Thursday morning when he went through the window and plunged onto the concrete steps leading into the building at 1300 Beaubien. The window had a metal security grate.

On Friday, Cmdr. Gerald Stewart, who is in charge of the homicide section, said: "We are looking into why it happened and ways we can avoid it from happening in the future."

It was at least the fifth time since 1984 that someone has jumped or fallen from the nine-floor building.

Stewart said there was no evidence the metal grate had been left open for ventilation, but one police official said it had. "They left it propped open to get air," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Authorities said Jones has not yet been charged in the slayings but is being held for jumping bond in a 1993 cocaine-dealing case. Search warrants were being executed and evidence was being tested Friday, authorities said.

Stewart would not say if any of the investigators overseeing Jones will face punishment.

Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

Page: 18B

Index Terms: RECO JONES; JUMP ; POLICE ; HEADQUARTERS ; INJURY ; HOMICIDE ; SUSPECT

Dateline: Detroit

Record Number: 9708160153

Copyright (c) 1997 Detroit Free Press