

## RELATIVES BUNGLED ESCAPE, POLICE SAY

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Author: Free Press staff writer

Even though relatives of inmates began planning the escape three months ago, Michigan's biggest prison break in 70 years was an ill-conceived affair, authorities said Monday.

Moreover, despite earlier suggestions that jail personnel on the inside helped the 10 escape from the Ryan Correctional Facility in Detroit, officials said two guards have passed polygraph tests and at this point, they don't believe guards were involved.

"Once they got out and determined what the actual circumstances were, their plans did not come together," State Police Lt. Richard Duthler said at a news conference Monday. "There was not enough transportation for all the prisoners. So, they may not have made the best plans, but the core group was able to leave the scene."

Telephone and other records show those men -- Pierre Porter, Monty Matthews, **Mark McCloud**, Andre Gamble and the only one still at large, Tyrone Garland -- masterminded the escape four to five weeks in advance, Duthler said.

"Based on what we have learned, some of them were not prepared at all," he said. David Whitaker and Marvin Johnson, for example, "were picked up" by police "on the street with no place to go."

Other inmates such as Garland might have done more extensive planning. Authorities haven't determined whether other escapees helped plan the break or simply seized the opportunity to bolt, Duthler said. However, other inmates in the yard knew a prison break was going to occur.

Nine outsiders -- including two brothers and a sister of **McCloud** -- already have been charged with aiding the escape, helping after the fact or both. Larry **McCloud** is still at large. Without being more specific, Duthler said there is evidence that **Mark McCloud**'s relatives started planning the escape three months ago.

Two other **McCloud** sisters are to be arraigned in 36th District Court today, Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Bob Agacinski said. Veronica **McCloud** is charged with helping to plan, participating in and helping after the escape. Sharon Johnson is charged with helping after the fact.

Two authorities who spoke on condition of anonymity said Antonio Luchie, 22, hurled a shotgun and wire cutters over the fences of the northeast side prison.

Family ties, promises of money, threats of harm or a combination of the three may have prompted accomplices to assist the escapees, Duthler said.

"We have not put our finger on anything definite," Duthler said. "In all the interviews, there has not been one common thread on that."

Speculation that guards Tyrhea Littleton and Roslyn Pittman helped with the escape has proved untrue, state police director Col. Michael Robinson said Monday.

Authorities initially thought Littleton harbored an escapee and that Pittman intentionally failed to fire shots at escaping prisoners.

"Both of those individuals, of their own volition, asked to take polygraph exams," Robinson said. "They both passed those exams. . . . At this point, there is nothing to indicate any involvement by corrections officials."

Deputy Detroit Police Chief Benny Napoleon said a task force of city, county, state and federal police is focusing on capturing Garland and John Cosby, who escaped after hijacking a police helicopter in a separate incident Aug. 17.

Rewards of \$3,000 are being offered for tips leading to their capture. Authorities already have paid out about \$12,000 in reward money, Napoleon said. The dragnet for the two men also is being extended nationwide.

Department of Corrections spokesman Warren Williams said the department continues to review its policies and procedures. A guard tower and an electrified fence may be installed at Ryan. Guards also may receive additional training in how to handle breakouts.

The Michigan House Corrections Committee will hold a public hearing on the escape at 10 a.m. Wednesday at the Detroit Police 11th Precinct Mini-Station, 5100 E. Nevada.

Anyone with information on the fugitives should call police at 1-313-596-1700 anytime.

Caption: Photo; Map

: Larry **McCloud** Deputy Chief Benny Napoleon, right, reacts to a remark by State Police Col. Michael Robinson.

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