Letter To Michael Baden

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT



1020 North Main Street Columbia, IL 62236

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KENNEY BADEN @ MSN. COM



FAX TRANSMITTAL

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24 Pages (including this page)

May 19th, 2009

Dr. Michael Baden

Re: Homicide investigation Columbia Illinois Police Department

Victims: Sheri A Coleman 07-03-77 Garett D-E Coleman 04-30-98 Gavin C Coleman 01-25-09

Sir,

Per our conversations I am sending you selected photos of the crime scene along with photos of the autopsies. I am also sending you reports from the local Monroe County Coroner who pronounced the victims dead and was also involved in the Liver probe. The report from the Assisting Coroner from Madison County, who actually did the probe, is also being sent. I also am sending officers reports that first made contact with the deceased family so you can see what their observations were at 0651 hrs.

To give you a breakdown of what we know, the Coleman family started receiving threats through emails in November of 2008 to members of the Joyce Meyers Ministry and to Mr. Christopher Coleman. The content was consistent in the threats in that they were directed to Mr. Coleman to stop protecting Joyce Meyer and stop spending too much time with his job, or his family would pay. The threats continued in January of 2009 when unknown subject left a typed message in the Coleman's mailbox with the same type of threat. Another letter was left in the mailbox on April 27th 2009 and also stated the warnings were over and the family would pay.

After the last letter, a camera was placed across the street watching the mailbox and Mr. Coleman set up surveillance cameras in and outside his home.

On May 4th the family spent time together and ate dinner around the 5:30 p.m. time, according to Mr. Coleman they had chicken and beets and pasta. They later went and purchased snow-cones at a local store. Mr. Coleman went to work out around 8:15 p.m. and returned around 9:00. His wife was watching a movie and drinking corona beer and he then helped put the kids to bed. He later took a shower around 10:00 p.m. and afterwards noticed his wife was asleep. He then states he put her to bed upstairs and he went to bed. He uses his cell phone as an alarm and keeps this by him.

Records indicate his cell phone was used to access the internet at 0240 hrs, but this was not known at the time of the interview.

Mr. Coleman states he woke by alarm at 0530 hrs and at this time his wife was alive, and asleep next to him. He then walked downstairs and did not see anything unusual, such as paint on the walls. He then left, according to the video of his mailbox, at 0543 hrs. He then used his phone to call his wife at 0544 hrs to wake her up to get the kids ready for school. No answer. He then continues about 15 minutes away to a local gym and worked out for about 35 minutes. During this time, he attempted to call his wife several times or text her, but never made contact. On his way home, he still could not make contact so

he decided to call the police officer who lives across the street and asked him to check on his family. This call came in at 0643 hrs. The officer is observed walking across the street at 0651 hrs and is met with a marked police unit. They check on the house and the doors were locked but the rear basement full window was open. The officer remembers looking at the floor for any glass but did not find any and did not see any vegetation such as grass or clover. The two officers entered the house and observed the writings on the walls and made their way upstairs. During this time, Mr. Coleman arrives home and is met by another marked squad and after entering the garage, was told to step outside while the house was checked. The officers walked upstairs and found the 3 victims in their respective bedrooms all without signs of life. The officers placed their fingers on each of the victim's necks and noticed they were cold to touch and their necks were described as being "thick" in that the skin seemed solid and did not move. Ligature marks were observed at this time.

One officer went to each child and shook their shoulder area and noticed they appeared to be solid, in that their body moved together.

Sgt. Donjon checked on Sheri and went to roll her over and noticed her head, neck and shoulders all moved as one as if they were locked together. He then checked a pulse and noticed her neck tissue felt hard and the skin did not move. He also noticed purple color on the bottom half of how the body was situated.

The officers retreated outside waiting for assistance. It was decided not to re-enter until a search warrant was issued.

At 1108 the two coroners entered the house due to the possibility of evidence being destroyed and conducted the liver probes. See their reports. At this time, the mother, Sheri was rolled over and was in what has been described as full rigor.

As for the autopsy, fluid from the eyes was not gathered. The stomach contents of Sheri were measured at 20 cc's according to the coroner. It appeared to contain black beans, a tomato peel and peppers. No contents were found in the two boys.

I am emailing photos from the crime scene and photos of the autopsies.

I am requesting from you, your professional opinion on the time of deaths of this family. More specific is your opinion on whether or not the victims were alive at the time Mr. Coleman left his house, being 0543 hrs.

Respectfully requested,

Major Jeff Connor

Deputy Commander

Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis

Major Jeff Lang