

Latimer County sheriff charged with having sex with inmates

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[2004 Cop rape inmates](#) Melvin Ellis Holly

Melvin Ellis Holly is charged with false statement and witness intimidation.

MUSKOGEE -- Latimer County Sheriff Melvin Ellis Holly had frequent sex with female jail inmates and then threatened them if they talked, according to a federal charge unsealed Wednesday in U.S. District Court.

Holly, 63, had sex with at least three female inmates, according to an affidavit by FBI Special Agent James Dawson.

U.S. Attorney Sheldon Sperling said Holly is charged with false statement and witness intimidation, felony offenses punishable by five years and 10 years in prison respectively.

At an initial appearance in federal court, Holly was ordered held without bail pending a detention and preliminary examination by Magistrate Kimberly E. West at 2 p.m. Friday.

Sperling asked for detention on grounds that one of the crimes involves violence and Holly poses a danger to another person.

The investigation, which began in April, continues, Sperling said.

He noted, in a press release, that Oklahoma law provides that jail inmates are incapable of consenting to sexual relations with law enforcement officers.

Holly was arrested at the McAlester FBI office at 3:15 p.m. Tuesday.

Holly was defeated for a third four-year term in the July Democratic primary by former Latimer County Assessor Wayne Brinkley, 45.

Holly was to leave office in January.

His alleged sexual assaults were traced to September 2003, according to a former inmate who said she had sexual intercourse with Holly after being taken to a railroad facility in Wilburton, the FBI affidavit said.

The 25-year-old woman relented because she was "afraid something bad would happen if she did not 'give in,' " the affidavit said.

The woman said she had sexual intercourse at two other times, once at Lake Carlton near Robbers Cave State Park, the affidavit said.

At one other time, Holly took the inmate to a sheriff's meeting at a Krebs restaurant and "listened to the business of the sheriffs of southeast Oklahoma," the affidavit said.

The 25-year-old said she is undergoing counseling to deal with problems since her release. One of the problems is intimacy with her husband and in dealing with her children, the affidavit said.

The woman also said she was taken from the jail to the Latimer County General Hospital where she was given a sedative after she had been crying for 24 hours.

Another inmate, a 19-year-old, told the FBI agent that Holly took her from her cell to the A-OK Railroad facility, where she declined his advances.

Holly then took her to his Red Oak home which had been destroyed by fire, authorities said.

At the site, Holly and the inmate had sex in the back seat of his sheriff's vehicle, officials said. Four or five days later, Holly brought the woman to his Sheriff's Office where they had sex on the floor, the affidavit said.

Afterward, the sheriff took "moonshine" from a cabinet and served it to her and her cellmate when he returned her to the cell, the affidavit said.

When Holly learned the woman was being taken to another jail, he learned she wanted to speak to law enforcement officers. He pressured her to write a statement that she recanted her story, the affidavit said.

Holly told the inmate she would "end up dead somewhere, floating face down in a river for having talked," the affidavit said.

The inmate said she was afraid of Holly because he had claimed "he has shot and killed numerous people."

The inmate said she spent time at a psychiatric clinic and is on the antidepressant Prozac to cope with the depression "from being raped" by Holly, the affidavit said.

A third inmate, a 26-year-old, said she had sex with Holly on five or six occasions in Holly's office.

She said she last had sex with Holly in May, although Holly continued to "bug" her about it.

Two other female inmates told the FBI of seeing Holly kiss or grope the 19- and 25-year-old inmates. One said she saw Holly take female inmates with him in sheriff vehicles and his own vehicle, the affidavit said.

A 34-year-old female inmate said Holly made several sexual advances toward her, including comments and groping, but denied having sexual intercourse with him.

On Sept. 15, the FBI interviewed Holly at his office, but Holly denied ever having any kind of sexual contact with any female inmates in his jail.

Holly was wounded in a September 1998 gunfight after he responded to a woman screaming in downtown Wilburton, news articles show.

The woman was killed by a boyfriend, who exchanged shots with Holly. But the boyfriend died from a self-inflicted gunshot, authorities said.

In March 1998, Holly shot and killed a Buffalo Valley man after responding to a call of a man pointing a gun at people, news articles show.

In a struggle with the man, Holly pulled his revolver and shot the man.

He is a former police chief in Red Oak and Wilburton. He was elected sheriff in 1996, and won re-election in 2000, the first sheriff in 40 years to win back-to-back terms in Latimer County.

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