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2 Victorville Deputies Quit, 6 Suspended in Sex Inquiry

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February 23, 1986 | Associated Press

Three more San Bernardino County deputies from the Victorville sheriff's station were suspended in an investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct, bringing to eight the number of officers relieved of their duties since an 18-year-old Explorer told authorities she was raped by one deputy and had sexual relations with others.

Two of the five deputies initially suspended resigned last week. The other six have been suspended from duty and stripped of their guns and badges, but they will continue to draw salary pending the outcome of the investigation, Sheriff Floyd Tidwell said Friday.

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No arrests have been made, he said.

Tidwell declined to say whether the deputies suspended Friday were being investigated for alleged involvement with the same woman or others.

The Explorer, one of three females in the sheriff's Victorville post, told authorities she was raped by one deputy after a wedding reception last week and had sexual relations with others before she turned 18.

The alleged sexual encounters occurred over a two-year period, Tidwell said, adding that one deputy is accused of rape by intimidation and threats, not forcible rape.

He said the criminal and administrative investigations should be turned over early this week to the district attorney, who will determine whether there is sufficient evidence to bring criminal charges.

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"They are entitled to the same consideration as anyone else. They are innocent until proven guilty," Tidwell said.

Tidwell on Thursday identified the two deputies who resigned, but said he is legally prohibited from naming those under investigation because they are protected under the Peace Officers Bill of Rights.

The officers who resigned, Robert M. Swindle, 31, and James B. Dawson, 38, lost that protection when they ceased to be peace officers, Tidwell said. Swindle and Dawson are not being investigated in connection with the rape, Tidwell said.

The Explorer Post at the Victorville station has nine members.

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