

# The Washington Post

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2003

A25

*Colbert I. King*

## Dangerous 'Brotherhood' at the D.C. Jail?

"Is there a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood at the D.C. Jail?" I put that question to D.C. Corrections Department spokesman Darryl Madden on Tuesday. He wasn't familiar with the name but said he would check with the staff and get back to me.

There's a good chance that Givon Pendleton, an inmate at the D.C. Jail, could have shed some light on my question. Unfortunately, Pendleton is no longer accessible, his availability having ended abruptly a year ago this month, specifically on the evening of Dec. 11, 2002, in the dining room of the Southeast 1 cellblock of the D.C. Jail, at 1901 D-St. SE.

The autopsy performed on Pendleton found nine stab wounds to his body, including one to the left temple, one to the back of the neck on the left side, one to the lower end of the left shoulder blade on the back, one to the lower back, one to a bicep on his left arm, two wounds to the left front chest, one to the left abdomen and one to the right abdomen. The stab wounds to the chest, having perforated his heart, lung and stomach, are what killed him. Not surprisingly, Sarah Colvin of the chief medical examiner's office ruled Pendleton's death a homicide.

Thirteen days after responding to the call about a stabbing at the jail, D.C. police detectives charged the alleged assailant, Dominic Jones, aka "Twin."

At the time, Jones was in jail on charges of shooting and killing two others in an unrelated case. According to a police affidavit in support of the arrest warrant in Pendleton's case, Jones admitted stabbing him multiple times but said it was in self-defense.

A sentence in the police affidavit caught my eye: "The investigation also revealed that the defendant [Jones] is a member of a group called the 'Muslim Brotherhood.'"

Now that rang a bell.

The Muslim Brotherhood movement, known officially as Jamiat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, has been around since 1928, when it got started in Egypt. Best known for its opposition to secular influences on Islamic societies, the Muslim Brotherhood has spread throughout the world, including the United States. By thought, word and deed, it doesn't exactly represent the peace-loving side of Islam. Its motto: "Allah is our objective; The Prophet is our leader; Quran is our law; Jihad is our way; Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope."

Hence, my question to the Corrections Department's Madden on Tuesday.

Beside my computer terminal is an internal Corrections Department report about an incident that occurred at the jail's Southwest 3 cellblock on April 10, 2002.

It involved the same Dominic Jones. He and two other inmates had allegedly assaulted an inmate, sending the victim to the hospital. The report said an informant told the correctional staff that Jones and the other two assailants were Muslims who were strong-arming inmates.

That April report brought to mind the late Givon Pendleton's own encounter with Dominic Jones on Dec. 11, 2002.

On that fatal day, an eyewitness told detectives, he saw Pendleton, a pretrial detainee, approach a table in the dining room to get some milk to go along with his dinner. Jones, according to the eyewitness, told Pendleton that the milk was reserved for the Muslims.

Here's where it gets funky.

Pendleton is supposed to have said, "I'm tired of you all in this Muslim [expletive]" and took some milk.

From the affidavit:

"Twin" [Jones] took the milk from the decedent [Pendleton] and invited him into a jail cell to fight. The decedent initially agreed, but did not enter the cell. Thereafter the defendant called the decedent into the gym. When the decedent entered the gym, the witness observed the defendant with something up his sleeve. The witness then saw the defendant punch the decedent and then saw him stab him multiple times with a knife. This witness never saw anything in the hands of the decedent and never saw the decedent inflict any blows." Another eyewitness saw pretty much the same thing, according to the affidavit.

Pendleton's mother, Pearl Beale, is suing the District for millions. Through her lawyer, Douglas Sparks, a board member of the D.C. Prisoners' Legal Services Project, Beale charges the city with maintaining poor jail se-

curity, which allowed the knife, or shank, that was used to kill her son to be brought into the jail. She also charges the city with negligent supervision in that Jones, with a history of assaulting and strong-arming pretrial detainees, was put in charge of dispensing meals and milk to inmates. Her lawsuit also charges the District with negligently and unconstitutionally allowing overcrowding at the jail while failing to assign enough properly trained and supervised guards to monitor the excessive number of inmates. How she will fare is up to the judicial system.

How men and women in the care and protection of the D.C. Jail are faring is an even larger mystery. Last Saturday four inmates were shot and wounded. As of yesterday, no one had been charged.

If the Corrections Department can't explain how a gun got into the jail and, a week later, is also clueless about who used it, is it any wonder that a report of predatory inmates strong-arming detainees could escape the attention of higher-ups, or that the Muslim Brotherhood could take up residence in the jail without catching the leadership's attention? Yesterday Mr. Madden called to say, "There's no organized identification of that group behind bars." He had not heard about the statement in the police department's affidavit.

Sigh.

*kingc@washpost.com*