



Fresno County Sheriff – Coroner Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner

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News Release

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Man Orchestrates Abduction to Extort Money from Father

Fresno County Sheriff's detectives have booked **Hollis Priest**, 35, of Fresno and **Dustin Petersen**, 30, of Fresno into the Fresno County Jail.

Priest faces felony charges of extortion, concealing stolen property, probation violation and false reporting of a kidnapping to obtain ransom. He also faces a misdemeanor of resisting arrest. His bail has been set at \$102,500.

Petersen had outstanding bench warrants out for his arrest related to a felony of burglary and a misdemeanor for driving under the influence of drugs. His bail has been set at \$110,000.

On Monday, 5/30/16 at 5:30 am, the Fresno County Sheriff's Office received a report of a possible kidnapping at the 5800 block of W. Olive Ave in Fresno. The caller said an unknown person was sending him text messages, claiming to have kidnapped his 35 year old son, Hollis Priest. The suspect made a ransom request and demanded thousands of dollars in order for his son to be release. The text messages to the father were coming from Priest's cell phone. Detectives took over the case and began to try and find Priest.

Throughout the day, arrangements were made to pay the ransom in exchange for Priest's release. The suspect was told to drive to the area of Clinton and Brawley Avenues in Fresno, then head into the Burger King parking lot. There they would find a white truck which contained the

cash. Priest spoke to his father over the phone and told him he was being driven to the location for the money swap.

Detectives set up surveillance in the area. At about 5:45 pm, Priest himself arrived as the passenger in the vehicle, which was driven by Dustin Petersen. Priest got out of the car and got into the white truck to look for the ransom money. Detectives made contact with Priest and he immediately became combative with them. Detectives eventually gained control over Priest and arrested him. Petersen was also taken into custody.

Detectives have interviewed several people and that allowed them to come to the conclusion that Priest was never kidnapped or held against his will. Detectives determined he made up the kidnapping allegations in order to get money from his father.

Priest and Petersen are known methamphetamine users. Both have extensive criminal histories.

Anyone with additional information on the suspects in this case is asked to please contact the Sheriff's Office dispatch at (559) 600-3111 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-STOP (7867). All tips will remain anonymous and you may be eligible for a cash reward.

Case # 16-8724