

## **Tenant alleges abuse by deputy**

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

March 19, 2000, Sunday, 2 Late Tampa Edition

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**Section:** TAMPA & STATE; Pg. 1B

**Length:** 1269 words

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**Dateline:** WIMAUMA

### **Body**

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A Hillsborough **deputy** who is landlord at a mobile home park is accused of beating a migrant worker.

Ancelmo Castillo-Badillo and Rudy Robledo were watching television on a rare day off when, they say, the sheriff's **deputies** arrived.

Two of them walked into the dilapidated mobile home without knocking, the men say, their guns drawn.

One was their landlord, **Deputy** Charles D. Maye.

In the next few minutes, Maye shoved Castillo against a wall, put a gun to his head, punched him several times, knocked him to the floor, stomped on his elbow and handcuffed him, the men say. A third roommate, Reynaldo Gutierrez, said he witnessed the incident.

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Maye and two other **deputies** had apparently pegged Castillo as a suspect in the shooting of another migrant worker on the morning of Nov. 20, sheriff's records show, because he drove a van similar to one used during the crime.

When witnesses to the shooting told Maye he had the wrong man, the **deputy** apologized and slipped \$ 60 into the Mexican immigrant's pocket, Castillo said.

"Since that day, I live in fear because I feel he's been checking on me," said Castillo, 40. "I'm afraid something might happen to me."

Internal affairs detectives at the sheriff's office already are investigating Maye's side job as a landlord at Mi Amigo's camp, where he rents 25 single-wide mobile homes to migrant laborers, who pay weekly rent totaling as much as \$ 960 a month. Health inspectors in January found problems at the camp, including broken screens and windows and holes in the walls of some of the homes.

Maye's **tenants** say he often does his landlord work in his sheriff's uniform, with his gun on his hip, and can be an intimidating force at the dusty Wimauma camp.

While Maye's boss said the **deputy** is not supposed to handle any law enforcement work at Mi Amigo's, sheriff's records show the **deputy** has done so at least four times in the past year, including the morning of Nov. 20.

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Twice, Maye responded to 911 calls that ended up being dismissed as non-emergencies. Earlier this month, he drove his cruiser to the camp while on duty and threatened to arrest a St. Petersburg Times reporter and a mission worker, saying they were trespassing.

Sgt. Rod Reder, a spokesman for the sheriff's office, said there is no evidence that Maye came into contact with Castillo on Nov. 20.

Records filed by deputies who first responded to the 7:15 a.m. shooting show Castillo was an early suspect. Dispatch logs show Maye and two other deputies were called to the camp on a report that the suspect's van had pulled up at trailer No. 8, the unit Castillo rents.

No complaint of excessive force was ever filed.

"If there are allegations like that, we would encourage them to contact our internal affairs office so we can conduct a thorough investigation," Reder said.

Maye, who was transferred to a different patrol area in southern Hillsborough after the Times reported on his work as a landlord last week, was on sick leave and could not be reached for comment.

Sheriff's records of the Nov. 20 shooting investigation at Mi Amigo's show Maye did more than simply respond to the scene.

Patrol logs list Maye as the primary officer when he and two other deputies investigated the report that the suspect had reappeared at Mi Amigo's. Maye and the two backup officers arrived at the camp between 10:14 a.m. and 10:34 a.m., records show.

But Maye did not report he was done with the call until 12:10 p.m, nearly 1 1/2 hours after the other two officers told dispatchers they were leaving the camp.

Records also show it was Maye who later told a detective investigating the case that the man who was shot, 33-year-old Amalondo Gonzalez, "did not wish to pursue criminal charges." Gonzalez is one of Maye's tenants. He lives just a few doors down from Castillo.

Detective Wayne Lopez asked Maye to have Gonzalez call him to confirm he wanted the case dropped.

Lopez sent Gonzalez a letter but didn't hear from him for 19 days. He recommended the case be closed. It was.

Maye never filed a report about the two hours he spent at the camp on Nov. 20. The only record of his presence came from dispatch logs.

The deputies who responded with Maye, Cpl. Kenneth Escobio and deputy Nicholas Matos, also did not file reports.

Matos said Friday he had been advised by sheriff's officials not to discuss the case because Maye is under investigation. Escobio could not be reached for comment.

Castillo, Robledo and Gutierrez say the official file tells only a fragment of the story.

The three men, who came to Florida from Mexico to earn money picking fruit and vegetables and doing odd jobs, say they were lounging in their mobile home at Mi Amigo's on a quiet Saturday morning, tired from working in the vegetable fields of Manatee and Hillsborough counties all week.

Gutierrez was lying on a bed in the living room. Castillo and Robledo were watching a video in the bedroom.

At about 10:30 a.m., Maye and another deputy entered the home without knocking, the men said.

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Castillo and Robledo say they heard a noise and went to investigate. Maye grabbed Castillo when he walked into the living room and threw him against the wall, yelling "La pistola, La pistola." He wanted to know the location of the gun used in the shooting, Castillo said.

After seeing Maye punch and kick Castillo several times and hold a gun to his temple, Robledo says, he fled to the bedroom. Gutierrez pretended he was asleep just a few feet away.

"I just tried to hide myself with a blanket, but I saw everything," Gutierrez said through an interpreter.

Maye eventually handcuffed Castillo and took him to mobile home No. 2, where the shooting occurred, the men said. The laborers who lived there said Castillo was not the gunman.

After uncuffing Castillo, Maye took him to a trailer in the back of the park that serves as an office, Castillo said. There, Maye apologized, speaking through a Spanish-speaker who works for him, and slipped something into Castillo's jeans.

"I was so scared I didn't even look in my pocket for a while," Castillo said. When he got back to his mobile home, he said he found \$ 60 in his pocket.

**Deputies** later determined the likely suspect in the shooting was another **tenant** at the camp who drove a brown van similar to Castillo's. He was never apprehended.

Castillo's story of being beaten by his landlord spread quickly through the mobile home park. The next day, several **tenants** urged him to talk to a lawyer or file a complaint.

Castillo said he was afraid to report the incident to the sheriff's office because his landlord is a sheriff's **deputy**.

"I thought they weren't going to believe me," he said. "I thought maybe they would beat me again."

Instead, he went to the Good Samaritan Mission in Balm. Castillo told mission worker Laura Cruz what happened and showed her cuts and bruises.

Cruz said she tried to retain several attorneys, but they didn't want to take the case. She didn't think filing a complaint with the sheriff's office would do any good.

"I never thought of talking to the police," Cruz said. "The first thing that came to my mind was, they were going to hide it."

Reder said that wouldn't happen. "The Sheriff's Office would not tolerate behavior like that, if it did occur."

Castillo, whose wife and two children are in Mexico, said a migrant worker has little chance of receiving justice in the United States.

"If I was in Mexico, I would have gone to a lawyer myself," he said. "It's not fair what happened to me."

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## Graphic

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COLOR PHOTO, MIKE PEASE; Ancelmo Castillo-Badillo and Reynaldo Gutierrez.

## Classification

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**Language:** ENGLISH

**Subject:** SHERIFFS (91%); SHOOTINGS (90%); MIGRANT WORKERS (90%); FOREIGN LABOR (90%); INVESTIGATIONS (90%); INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS (78%); ARRESTS (78%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (77%); WITNESSES (74%); IMMIGRATION (73%)

**Company:** ST PETERSBURG TIMES (51%); ST PETERSBURG TIMES (51%)

**Industry:** RENTAL PROPERTY (89%); MOBILE HOMES (89%); TRAILER PARKS (73%)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2000

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