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Attorneys Ben Crump and Antonio Romanucci React to News That Sixth Officer Involved in Tyre Nichols' Death has Been Relieved of Duty

January 30, 2023

Nationally renowned civil rights and personal injury attorneys Ben Crump and Antonio Romanucci have issued a statement following the announcement that the sixth officer involved in the traffic stop that led to Tyre Nichols' death has been 'relieved of duty.' Officer Preston Hemphill can be seen on video violently pulling Nichols from his car while hitting him on the ground with a Taser, later saying, "I hope they stomp his ass" after Nichols ran away. Hemphill has not been terminated or charged.

The five other officers (Justin Smith, Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley, Emmitt Martin III, Desmond Mills Jr) involved in the death of Tyre Nichols have been charged with second-degree murder, aggravated assault, two counts of aggravated kidnapping, and two counts of official misconduct and official oppression.

Attorneys for the family issued the following statement:

"The news today from Memphis officials that Officer Preston Hemphill was reportedly relieved of duty weeks ago, but not yet terminated or charged, is extremely disappointing. Why is his identity and the role he played in Tyre's death just now coming to light? We have asked from the beginning that the Memphis Police Department be transparent with the family and the community - this news seems to indicate that they haven't risen to the occasion. It certainly begs the question why the white officer involved in this brutal attack was shielded and protected from the public eye, and to date, from sufficient discipline and accountability. The Memphis Police Department owes us all answers."