

CNT

PRESS STATEMENT

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FEDERAL PATTERNS AND PRACTICES COMPLAINT FILED

A Patterns and Practices complaint signed by members of the Community Negotiating Team (CNT) and hundreds of community members was filed today with the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division--Special Litigation Section.

The complaint outlines numerous problems with the Minneapolis Police Department and asks the Justice Department to conduct an investigation. Police departments in other cities have been put under Justice Department supervision following such complaints.

Federal Mediation about these police problems was scheduled to start in early December 2002. Instead, Chief Olson “delayed” the start of mediation because he did not like the composition of the community’s mediation team. Six months later mediation is no closer to starting, and the City is still trying to control who sits at the table.

“During the six months since Federal Mediation was to start, the City has done nothing but try to manipulate the community team. With incidents like the homicide of Chris Burns occurring in our community, we have no choice but to seek methods that the City cannot manipulate,” said Michelle Gross, a member of the CNT and Communities United Against Police Brutality. “The City keeps throwing up road blocks to Federal Mediation, so the community has decided to take a different route,” says Pauline Thomas, a member of the CNT and Executive Director of Community Collaborative.

A copy of the complaint was also delivered to U.S. Attorney Thomas B. Heffelfinger today.

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