**20 Facts about *The Great Atlanta Massacre***

***of Black Educators* That Incriminate**

**the American Justice System**

**By Phillip Jackson**

Eleven Black Atlanta educators have been charged, indicted, arrested, tried and convicted of conspiring to commit racketeering as they worked in the Atlanta Public Schools. I have one request of you as you begin to read the facts of this case. Please keep an open mind and make your decision of guilt or innocence based on the facts:

1. The Atlanta educators were not convicted of cheating, taking money, getting or giving promotions, or harming children in any way.
2. The Atlanta educators were convicted of conspiring to commit *racketeering*, a charge usually reserved for mobsters, gang leaders and corrupt financial organizations. (Some 1st- and 2ndq-grade teachers were convicted of *racketeering*.)
3. Cheating is not a statutory crime in Georgia. So people cannot be prosecuted in court nor go to jail for cheating in Georgia. However Georgians can be disciplined, suspended, fired or lose their teaching license for cheating.
4. Most of the eleven convicted Atlanta educators had little more than traffic tickets on their records before they were sentenced to prison for “up to 10 years.”
5. Bail ranges for these defendants, who had never harmed anyone, were set for **$1 million, $4 million and $7 million dollars**.
6. These Atlanta educators were convicted of **knowingly or UNKNOWINGLY** conspiring to participate in a corrupt organization.
7. Few of the educators knew each other or worked closely together before they were tried and convicted for ***conspiring*** to participate in a corrupt organization called the Atlanta Public Schools.
8. ***It was revealed during this case that only four of the eleven defendants on trial received bonuses that totaled $3,500.***  Seven defendants never received a bonus of any kind.  ***White bankers who almost destroyed the world financial system weren’t even charged, while Black teachers who may be innocent of changing answers on a school test are sentenced for up to 10 years!***
9. **Between $5 million and $10 million may have been spent developing and prosecuting this case, money and resources that should have been committed to educating children and improving communities.**
10. Similar levels of cheating occurred in many school districts in Georgia yet no other district attorney in Georgia prosecuted its educators.
11. Similar levels of cheating occurred in many school districts around the U.S., including Washington, D.C., yet no other district attorney in the country prosecuted its educators.
12. This is the ***first time*** in the history of America that educators accused of cheating have been tried and convicted of conspiring to commit racketeering.
13. The court admitted “hearsay” and “perjured” evidence against these convicted defendants.
14. The Atlanta educators who maintained their innocence were sentenced up to 10 years in prison. The Atlanta educatorswho admitted they cheated and testified against those who maintained their innocenceare now, mostly, back in the classroom teaching children.
15. **All of the 35 defendants originally indicted were minorities** although people of other races were also named in the original cheating scandal and indictment. Eventually, twelve **African Americans** were prosecuted and eleven were found guilty.
16. ***These Atlanta educators were destroyed!*** Most of the defendants lost everything defending themselves against the charges, including their jobs, their savings, their houses, their pensions, their futures.
17. These defendants were ***convicted by “press releases”*** and were considered “***guilty until proven innocent***.”
18. An estimated ***100,000 Black teachers have been retired, fired, removed or structured out of education*** in America since 1990.
19. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the objective, gold-standard on school testing in America, Black students in the Atlanta Public Schools made significant academic progress during the tenure of the defendants and even after the defendants left their jobs because of the work and educational reforms instituted by the defendants.
20. During this trial, and because of the efforts of the defendants, Atlanta, which is 39th in population among U.S. cities, scored 5th in 2009, 1st in 2010, 2nd in 2011 and 3rd in 2012 for creating the most Gates Millennium Scholars of all cities in the U.S.

If you evaluate the facts of this case, the work ethic of these educators and the success of Atlanta Public Schools, you will no doubt conclude that these convicted Atlanta educators were ***railroaded*** into prison by a skewed or dysfunctional court system. Either way, justice must prevail! These educators must be exonerated, compensated for their court costs and receive an apology from the U.S. Department of Justice! These are the facts.

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