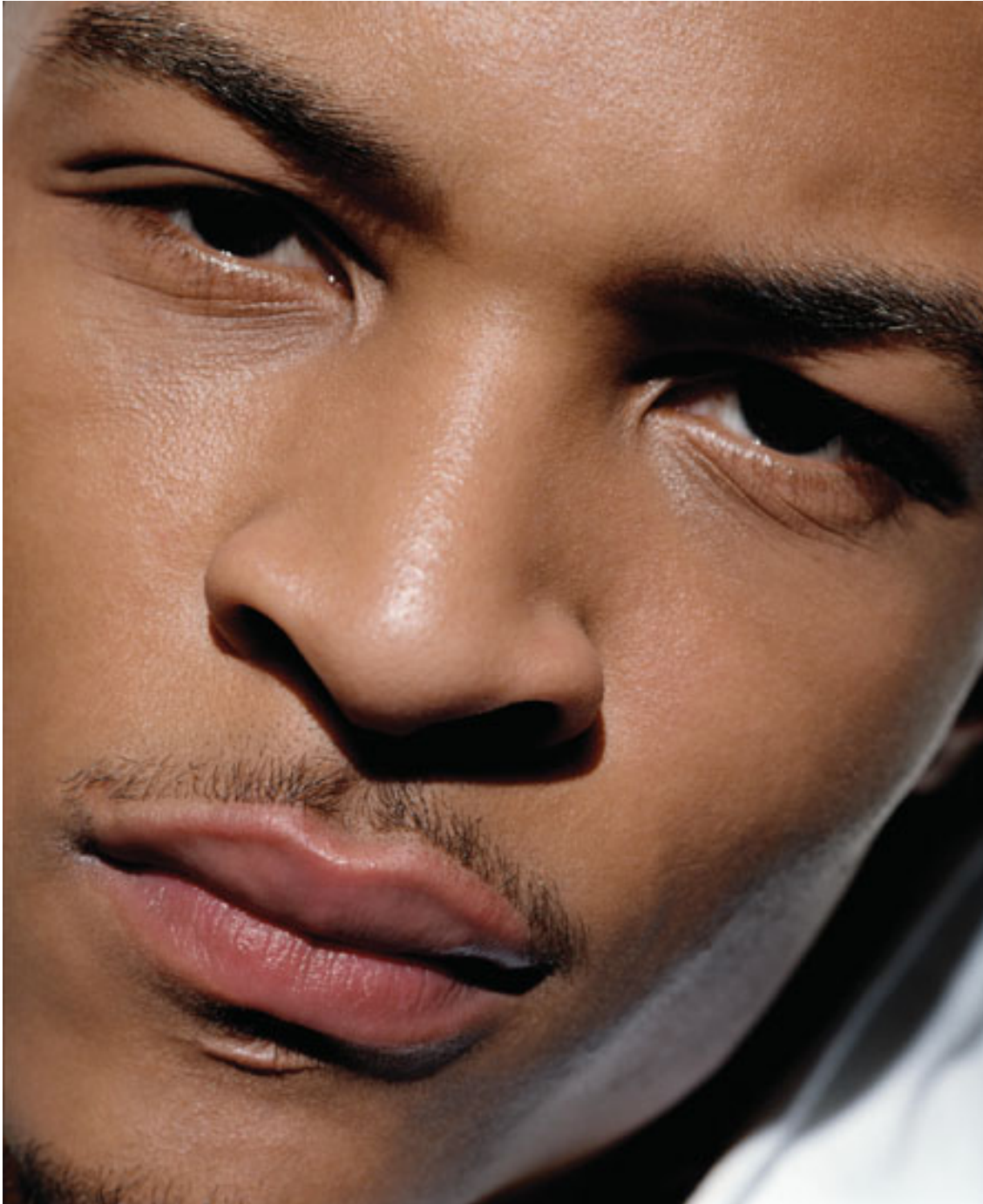


FEDS Say WHY T.I Went Back To Jail

Written by Administrator
Friday, 09 September 2011 00:00



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ATLANTA (AP) — Grammy-winning rapper T.I. was sent back to federal prison after corrections officials discovered that a manager and a TV producer were with him on a luxury bus as he transferred to a halfway house in Georgia, according to documents obtained Thursday by The

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Associated Press.

The two were not authorized to travel or conduct business with T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, during the 375-mile journey last week from the Arkansas federal prison to Atlanta, the Department of Justice incident report said. It said T.I. indicated he was discussing a new reality series and book with the individuals but said he wasn't being interviewed.

T.I. had been released a month early from his sentence for violating probation, and a VH1 reality show and book deal were announced within hours of his release.

But his attorney, Steve Sadow, said the rapper didn't violate prison rules because those deals already were finalized.

"There wasn't any business to conduct," he said. "These were just two people riding back with him."

The Bureau of Prisons declined to comment and the performer remains in federal custody. There will be a hearing in which federal authorities will review the potential violation and determine if T.I. can return to the halfway house, Sadow said.

T.I. made the trip with his wife, Tameka Cottle Harris, manager Brian Sher and producer Cris Abrego, who is co-president of 51 Minds Entertainment, which specializes in reality TV shows, according to letters provided to the AP.

Sher and Abrego said in letters sent to Bureau of Prisons officials that they visited with T.I. a few times before his release and no business was conducted during the trip.

T.I.'s business attorney, Jonathan Leonard, said in a letter sent Tuesday to federal officials that the TV deal was negotiated and signed in late July and processed through his office. The book deal with HarperCollins Publishers was sealed in June 2011, he said.

"It appears that some of the information listed in the report was obtained from internet reports and not from Mr. Harris," Leonard said in the letter.

Cottle Harris said in a letter that her husband's team decided the bus would be safer and make it more difficult for paparazzi to pull up next to the vehicle and take pictures or record video.

T.I. initially served about seven months in prison in 2009 after he was arrested for trying to buy unregistered guns and silencers from undercover federal agents. He was on probation after he was released and ordered not to commit another crime or to illegally possess any controlled substances. He then was arrested in Los Angeles in September 2010 after authorities said he was found with four ecstasy pills.

He was sentenced to 11 months in prison for that violation and had been set for release at the end of September, but he was allowed to transfer to an Atlanta halfway house about a month early. He was returned to federal prison a day later, and Sadow said T.I.'s legal team is fighting

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the move.

"T.I. was never told that only his wife was permitted to travel with him and was never instructed or directed to list each and every person that would be traveling with him," he said. "It is disingenuous at best for BOP to see the private bus, escort T.I. to the private bus, watch him enter the private bus, observe the bus driver and then say the only people authorized to be on the private bus are T.I. and his wife."