

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
CHARLESTON DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL, III

CRIMINAL NO.: 2:25-1338

18 U.S.C. § 2251(a)

18 U.S.C. § 2251(e)

18 U.S.C. § 2252A(a)(5)(B)

18 U.S.C. § 2252A(b)(2)

18 U.S.C. § 2253

28 U.S.C. § 2461(c)

INDICTMENT

COUNT 1

(Sexual Exploitation of Children)

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

That beginning on a date unknown to the Grand Jury, but at least July 2025, and continuing up to and including on or about August 2025, in the District of South Carolina, the Defendant, **JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL, III**, attempted to and did employ, use, persuade, induce, entice, and coerce a minor, namely M.F.V. # 1, to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; and knowing and having reason to know that such visual depiction was transported and transmitted using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce, and such depiction was produced and transmitted using materials that have been mailed, shipped, and transported in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means, including by computer, and such visual depiction was actually transported and transmitted using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce;

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2251(a) and 2251(e).

COUNT 2

(Sexual Exploitation of Children)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES:

That beginning on a date unknown to the Grand Jury, but at least July 2025, and continuing up to and including on or about August 2025, in the District of South Carolina, the Defendant, **JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL, III**, attempted to and did employ, use, persuade, induce, entice, and coerce a minor, namely M.F.V. # 2, to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; and knowing and having reason to know that such visual depiction was transported and transmitted using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce, and such depiction was produced and transmitted using materials that have been mailed, shipped, and transported in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means, including by computer, and such visual depiction was actually transported and transmitted using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce;

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2251(a) and 2251(e).

COUNT 3

(Sexual Exploitation of Children)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES:

That beginning on a date unknown to the Grand Jury, but at least July 2025, and continuing up to and including on or about August 2025, in the District of South Carolina, the Defendant, **JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL, III**, attempted to and did employ, use, persuade, induce, entice,

and coerce a minor, namely M.F.V. # 3, to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; and knowing and having reason to know that such visual depiction was transported and transmitted using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce, and such depiction was produced and transmitted using materials that have been mailed, shipped, and transported in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means, including by computer, and such visual depiction was actually transported and transmitted using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce;

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2251(a) and 2251(e).

COUNT 4

(Possession of Child Pornography)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES:

That beginning on a date unknown to the Grand Jury, and continuing up to and including on or about October 3, 2025, in the District of South Carolina, the defendant, **JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL, III**, did knowingly possess any material that contained an image of child pornography, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2256(8)(A) and (C), and that had been mailed, shipped and transported using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means, including by computer, and that was produced using materials that had been mailed, shipped and transported in interstate and foreign commerce by any means, including by computer;

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2252A(a)(5)(B) and 2252A(b)(2).

FORFEITURE**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN:**

Upon conviction for violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2251 and 2252A as charged in this Indictment, the Defendant, **JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL, III**, shall forfeit to the United States his interest in:

- i. any visual depiction described in section 2251, 2251A, 2252 or 2252A of chapter 110 of the United States Code, or any book, magazine, periodical, film, videotape, or other matter which contains any such visual depiction, which was produced, transported, mailed, shipped or received in violation of chapter 110 of the United States Code;
- ii. any property, real or personal, constituting or traceable to gross profits or other proceeds obtained from such offenses; and,
- iii. any property, real or personal, used or intended to be used to commit or to promote the commission of such offenses or any property traceable to such property.

PROPERTY:

The property subject to forfeiture pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 2253 and Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Proceeds/Forfeiture Judgment:

A sum of money equal to all proceeds the Defendant obtained, directly or indirectly, from the offenses charged in this Indictment, and all interest and proceeds traceable thereto, and/or such sum that equals all property derived from or traceable to his violation of Title 18.

SUBSTITUTE ASSETS:

If any of the property described above, as a result of any act or omission of the Defendant:

- a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
- b. has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third party;
- c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the court;
- d. has been substantially diminished in value; or
- e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be divided without difficulty,

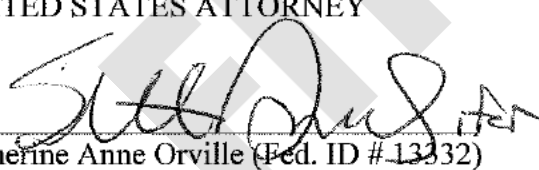
it is the intent of the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), as incorporated by 18 U.S.C. § 982(b)(1) to seek forfeiture of any other property of Defendant up to an amount equivalent to the value of the above-described forfeitable property;

All pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 2253 and Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c).

A true BILL

FOREPERSON

BRYAN P. STIRLING
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RECORD OF GRAND JURY BALLOT

C/R 2:25-1338

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA v. JOHN LEWIS COTTRELL III

(SEALED UNTIL FURTHER ORDER OF THE COURT)