



CALIFORNIA

Chauffeur for Jackson Tells of Errand : Investigation: In a sworn deposition, the driver says he was instructed by the entertainer to take a suitcase and briefcase from Jackson's apartment on the day it was searched for evidence of sexual molestation.

By **JIM NEWTON**

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TIMES STAFF WRITER

A chauffeur for Michael Jackson has said in a sworn deposition that the entertainer instructed him to take a suitcase and briefcase from Jackson's Century City apartment on the same day that investigators searched the property for evidence of sexual molestation, sources close to the case said Wednesday.

The chauffeur, Gary Hearne, was questioned by lawyers for more than five hours Tuesday, and some details of his statement were relayed to investigators Wednesday.

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ranch. That aide, Hearne allegedly said during his deposition, told him to go to the Century City apartment and await a phone call.

Hearne told the lawyers that about 15 minutes after he arrived at the apartment, he received a call from Jackson and Jackson's private investigator, Anthony J. Pellicano, sources said. They asked Hearne to pick up a briefcase, a suitcase and a number of other items from the apartment, Hearne reportedly said during his deposition.

Hearne said he was instructed to take the suitcase and the briefcase, which he told the lawyers he never opened, to Pellicano's home, according to sources. Hearne told the lawyers that he dropped the material off as instructed without ever looking inside either container. Because Hearne says he did not open the cases, he told lawyers that he does not know whether he removed evidence that might be of interest to investigators, sources said.

Larry R. Feldman, the lawyer for a 13-year-old boy who alleges that Jackson sexually molested him over a period of four months earlier this year, took the deposition from Hearne on Tuesday. Feldman refused to comment Wednesday.

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Hearne's deposition is the first in a long series that have been scheduled by attorneys on both sides of the mounting civil case, scheduled to go to trial next March. The boy's lawyer expects to take sworn statements from a number of Jackson's maids, as well as from Pellicano, Jackson and Jackson's sister LaToya.

Jackson's lawyers have stated in court papers that they expect to interview the boy who says he was molested, as well as the boy's mother and father and others close to him.

Jackson, who dropped out of sight last month after canceling his world tour and announcing that he had become addicted to painkillers, vehemently denies the sexual molestation allegations, which he says grew out of a failed \$20-million extortion attempt. Jackson has not been charged with any crime, but an investigation is continuing.

Although he declined to comment Wednesday on Hearne's deposition, Feldman told reporters Tuesday that the chauffeur said he drove Jackson to the boy's house at least

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Jim Newton

Jim Newton is the former editor at large of the Los Angeles Times.

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