



J. ALBERT DIAZ/HERALD STAFF

DEFINING FEATURE: Bertha Irving, the aunt of Frank Lee Smith, holds the glasses Smith wore for many years. Smith could not function without his glasses.

For 14 years, justice failed a man condemned to die

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The death sentence handed down to Frank Lee Smith surprised no one.

An 8-year-old girl had died — raped, sodomized, beaten and strangled with her pajama bottoms in her bed.

Her mother had seen the killer. Asked to identify him at trial, she pointed to Smith and sobbed, "My baby, my baby."

Jurors voted unanimously for the electric chair.



SMITH

Fifteen years later, the Smith conviction stands as a stunning miscarriage of justice, on par with the case of Jerry Frank Townsend of Hallandale Beach, just

released after serving 22 years for murders he didn't do.

This time a police officer could

▶ PLEASE SEE SMITH, 5A

