



In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Memphis, Tennessee
May 19, 1969

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RE: INVADERS
(CONNECTIONS WITH INTERRELIGIOUS
FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

[REDACTED]

As early as January 29, 1969, a first source advised that the National Council of Churches held its winter executive board meeting at the Peabody Hotel, Memphis, Tennessee, from the approximate period January 23, through 26, 1969; that during this time a group of young Memphis irresponsible black militants known as the Invaders made contact with certain officials at this conference demanding that the National Council of Churches finance them with as much as \$59,000 for a summer program to be administered by Coby Vernon Smith, male Negro, 2240 Brown Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, and student of Southwestern College, who during recent months, according to source one, has served as the prime adviser and liaison man of the Invaders with the white community.

Source one pointed out that Smith was one of the original founders of the Black Organizing Project of which the Invaders was a subsidiary cell, that for all practical purposes the Black Organizing Project has ceased to exist with the Invaders being the only original cell of the Black Organizing Project still in existence.

(A characterization of the Invaders is attached hereto in the appendix)

[REDACTED]

Also on January 29, 1969, a second source familiar with many activities of the Invaders advised that since that time there had been some contacts on the part of Coby Smith with (IFCO) known as the Interreligious Foundation For Community Organizations particularly with one Rennie Freeman allegedly of Detroit, Michigan. This source knew nothing further concerning Freeman or IFCO.

157-1067-1203

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~GROUP~~
~~Excluded from automatic~~
~~downgrading and~~
~~declassification~~

SEARCHED
INDEXED
SERIALIZED
FILED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RE: INVADERS
(CONNECTIONS WITH INTERRELIGIOUS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

[REDACTED]

As recently as April 17, 1969, source three advised that Melvin Smith, Minister of Defense and Minister of African Culture and History of the Invaders and Shirley Young, a member of the Invaders had commented that Coby Vernon Smith, along with Louis Welch, currently chairman of the Invaders, had somehow received two plane tickets from Memphis to Detroit, Michigan, and had left around 11:00 a.m., April 16, 1969, to go to Detroit, Michigan, to see Rennie Freeman of IFCO.

[REDACTED]

Later on April 23, 1969, source three advised that on Sunday, April 20, 1969, it had been ascertained with certainty that Coby Vernon Smith and Louis Welch had returned from Detroit, Michigan, where they said they had attempted to obtain money for the local Invaders from IFCO and that they were due to return to Detroit, Michigan, on or about Thursday, April 24, 1969.

[REDACTED]

Also on April 23, 1969, source three stated that Charles LaVerne Cabbage, one of the original founders of the Invaders, had commented that one E. A. Smith allegedly of IFCO was staying at the Lorraine Motel, 406 Mulberry, Memphis, and that on April 20, 1969, Coby Vernon Smith, Maurice Lewis, who is now in the United States Army and who was recently an active Invader, went to the hotel to see E. A. Smith, asking that IFCO provide the Invaders with \$79,000.

Source three pointed out that Charles LaVerne Cabbage of 234 Ingle, is currently free on both Federal and state bonds. He was recently convicted in United States District Court, Memphis on a charge of failure to report for Selective Service induction. The presiding judge has not as yet passed sentence. He is on state bond, appealing a recent conviction in Shelby County Criminal Court, wherein he was convicted of third degree burglary and carrying a pistol.

In the ensuing conversation, Smith indicated that Reverend H. Ralph Jackson, Director of the Minimum Salary Office of the AME Church, with offices at 276 Hernando, Memphis, Tennessee, and Treasurer of a Memphis Ministerial Group, which has supported various black militant causes, known as Community on the Move For Equality (COME), had applied for \$79,000 from IFCO and that the money would be granted by IFCO only if it could

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RE: INVADERS

(CONNECTIONS WITH INTERRELIGIOUS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

be equally divided among various Memphis civil rights and black power groups, such as the Black Knights, Inc., a group headquartered in North Memphis, headed by Warren Lewis, primarily aimed at neighborhood community projects, more employment for Negroes and projects of a constructive nature, COME, plus the Invaders.

E. A. Smith at this time gave to Coby Smith a list of names of prominent people connected with IFCO who Coby Smith could feel free to contact in seeking said funds. The list of people are not known to source three. E. A. Smith indicated to Coby Smith that he would probably be in Memphis on an average of once a month during the next few months although he did not elaborate in this regard.

Again, on April 24, 1969, source three advised that Coby Vernon Smith had called by long distance Rennie Freeman of IFCO in Detroit, that Freeman was not in; that Coby Smith talked with his alleged secretary, who indicated that plane tickets had been mailed to Smith for a forthcoming trip by him to Detroit. Coby indicated that IFCO has been having people come into the Detroit, Michigan, area, nearly every weekend from various black power groups throughout the United States.

As recently as May 3, 1969, source three advised that to the best of his knowledge, Coby Vernon Smith did make a trip to Detroit, Michigan, and was in all probability accompanied by Louis Welch.

Source three advised that Coby Smith has said nothing further concerning this trip and it is not known if he received any money or any specific promises of any money from IFCO.

Source three conjectured that the meeting which Coby Smith and possibly Louis Welch attended was in all probability the meeting of the National Black Economic Development Conference at Detroit's Wayne State University, described in

RE: INVADERS
(CONNECTIONS WITH INTERRELIGIOUS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

Jet magazine issue May 15, 1969, page 20, which had been called by IFCO for the purpose of rallying more church-related organizations around the growing concept of community development. This article of Jet indicated that the session ended in a frustrating debate over who should control the ghetto economy in the future - black capitalists or mixed socialism; that the Reverend Lucious Walker, Jr., IFCO Executive Director, had explained that the meeting was called "To bring black persons together to develop economic concepts that reach beyond the current fad of black capitalism and envelop to total community ---" The article continued that the rhetoric black militants obscured, the results of hardworking delegates most of whom represented black-controlled church foundations and governmental agencies and that as a result the black militants came forth with a manifesto demanding \$500,000,000 in "reparations from racist christian churches and Jewish synagogues" and that the manifesto was read by James Forman and his supporters. Forman, according to source three is the former First Executive Secretary of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a characterization of which is attached hereto.

The Jet article continued that in taking control of the meeting Forman, referred to as the former SNCC boss, demanded and got the delegates' endorsement to appoint the original IFCO steering committee to carry out the "revolutionary" manifesto. This article pointed out that the religious reparation fund called for in the manifesto would be used to set up land banks in the South, communication centers in major urban areas and to establish national cooperatives. The article pointed out that Forman told his screaming followers "We will begin the revolution --- by marching on the churches and holding them until the reparation is paid." "Let's not get hung up on the white man's parliamentary democracy --- All the dissenters leave."

The 'National Observer,' weekly newspaper published in Washington, D. C., page 3, issue May 10, 1969, pointed out that on the previous Sunday, James Forman had disrupted services at Riverside Church in New York, New York, by attempting to read the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RE: INVADERS
(CONNECTIONS WITH INTERRELIGIOUS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

manifesto before the 1,500 church attendees during said service.

The article pointed out that after Forman left Reverend Ernest Campbell, the church's preaching minister, commented that "The principal of reparation has sound theological underpinnings. Most christian churches in the United States feel penitent about what the white man has done to the black man in this society. Restitution is an integral part of penitence." It stated, however, that he criticized the manifesto as weak because it resorted to a "Good guy, bad guy motif." He added "The christian churches in this country have too long been concerned with private religious experience to the neglect of basic justice. Pay day has come. What the price should be and how and to whom it should be paid are questions properly before the house." This article indicated that the national headquarters of IFCO were located across the street from the Riverside Church and described IFCO as an agency funded by community-help organizations and by the social-action arms of several denominations, which had channeled one million three hundred thousand dollars to community projects in two years and that IFCO was under fire in Los Angeles for its aid to groups accused of militant activities.

As recently as May 15, 1969, sources one, two and three advised that to date there has been no indication that the Invaders or any other groups or individuals in Memphis, Tennessee, had made any effort to implement the demands outlined hereinbefore as originally propounded by James Forman at the Detroit meeting. Sources one, two and three also added that in their opinion Coby Vernon Smith is a con man and while he is most militant to the point of being obscenely offensive and violence prone in many of his statements, that primarily he is interested in his own self interest, feeding not only his ego, but enhancing his material wealth and that they feel he is attempting to bulldoze some foundation or group into granting a lot of money to the Invaders, which he Coby Smith hopes to convert to his own use if humanly possible.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT (BOP),
Also known as Black Organizing Power,
Afro-American Brotherhood,
Black Student Association,
Invaders,
Lemoyne Intercollegiate Chapter of the
National Association for the Advancement
of Colored People (NAACP),
City Organizers

On April 18, 1968, a first source advised that a black power group in Memphis which has been in existence for several months has until recently been known as Black Organizing Power. It is now known as Black Organizing Project (BOP), also known as Black Organizing Power, with five cells or parts, known as (1) Afro-American Brotherhood (AAB), primarily consisting of Owen College students; (2) Black Student Association (BSA), primarily consisting of Memphis State University (MSU) Negro students; (3) Lemoyne Intercollegiate Chapter of the NAACP, consisting of Lemoyne College students; (4) the Invaders, consisting mostly of high school dropouts; and (5) the City Organizers, comprised of young adults.

AAB has about 12 members; BSA has about 20 members; the Invaders has about 15 members; the Lemoyne group has about 20 members; and the City Organizers has about 20 members.

Source one advised that the BOP attempts to create pride in black identity, attempts to teach and promote the teaching of Negro history, and to promote black culture and obtain more employment for young Negroes.

The Executive Secretary of BOP is Charles Laverne Cabbage.

On February 16, 1968, Charles Laverne Cabbage personally acknowledged being leader of BOP, claiming he is the impetus of black power in Memphis, Tennessee, and that BOP's purpose is to stimulate in the young Negroes a sense of black identity, black pride, and black consciousness. He said his group follows the teachings of Student Non-Violent

...ing Committee (CIC) leaders H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael but that they did not necessarily exist as a formal SNCC unit. Casper further admitted he has made statements such as "Memphis should be burned" and "Memphis should have a good race riot," but claimed he did not mean these statements literally, merely endeavoring to shock the community into doing something to help the black race.

On February 27, 1968, a second source advised that at a public meeting on February 26, 1968, the BOP Chairman John Burwell Smith, told a Negro audience, "We've got to do some fighting," and "You'd better get some guns. You're going to need them before this is over. You can't rely your way out."

On June 6, 1968, the second source advised that BOP primarily consists of about 20 to 25 young college and high school students and school dropouts, unemployed and not looking for a job, who continually preach hatred of the white race and capitalistic economic system and advocating and predicting violence by blacks. The overall plan of BOP, according to source two, is to scare the Memphis community leaders, both black and white, into fearing black militancy. The BOP leaders then hope to convince the community to fund them as a form of subtle blackmail whereby BOP can prevent racial violence. Source two said that BOP is more interested in publicity and money than in direct action, but is nevertheless preaching violence in an effort to scare the community.

STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), headquartered at 360-362 Nelson Street, S. W., Atlanta, Georgia, is a nonmembership organization, which was born out of the sit-in movement that erupted across the South beginning in 1960.

Today SNCC identifies itself as an organization in the revolutionary vanguard. It advocates that to be successful it is necessary to develop a revolutionary ideology and revolutionary program.

According to SNCC the year 1967 marked a historic milestone in the struggle for the liberation of black people in the United States and the year that revolutionaries throughout the world began to understand more fully the impact of the black movement. SNCC declared that "liberation will come only when there is final destruction of this mad octopus--the capitalistic system of the United States with all its life-sucking tentacles of exploitation and racism that choke the people of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The realities of black life, together with the recognition instilled in SNCC workers forced its members to further popularize the legitimacy of self-defense and rebellions when oppression became too great."

From May, 1966, until May, 1967, Stokely Carmichael was National Chairman of SNCC. As of July, 1968, Carmichael resided in Washington, D. C., where he was affiliated with SNCC and active as temporary chairman of a black coalition group. In May, 1967, Carmichael was replaced by Hubert Geroid Brown, commonly known as H. Rap Brown, who served until June, 1968.

In June, 1968, at the Staff and Central Committee meeting of SNCC held in Atlanta, Georgia, it was decided to restructure the organization by equalization of responsibility by creating ten deputy or vice chairmanships. The primary purpose for this change is to take law enforcement pressure off any single individual.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RE: INVADERS
(CONNECTIONS WITH INTERRELIGIOUS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.