

Memorandum of Interview With Floyd
E. Newsum, Sr. of the Memphis Fire
Department, July 8, 1976.

Floyd E. Newsum, Sr. was interviewed by team members Folsom and Walker at his residence, located at 1818 Kingsview Drive, Memphis, Tennessee.

At the outset of the interview, Newsum attempted to play two tapes of interviews conducted with Newsum by students from Memphis State University in 1968. However, the tapes proved to be inaudible.

Newsum then proceeded to display handwritten notes which he had made of the events transpiring between April 3, 1968, and April 14, 1968. These notes were written by Newsum not later than April 14, 1968, and are as follows:

On Wed. morning April 3rd I talked to N. E. Wallace at #2 eng. house, I was told by him the Police Officers E. E. Redditt and W. B. Richman were there & they had the door leading out the rear of the locker room cover with paper with holes in it to able them to look out on the Lorraine Motel. One of them was on top of a locker with Binoculars.
At 10:PM Wed. Wallace was told to leave the #2 Eng. house & go to the #31 Eng. house at the Airport. At 11:30 PM April 3rd I was told by Lt. J. Smith of the Fire Dept. by phone Not to report to the #2 Eng. House on April 4th but to report to #31 which is at 4200 block Overton Crossing. To be sure that Redditt was at the #2 Eng. House I had someone call & ask to speak to him/he was there. That same evening Dr. King was killed. I ask why I was moved but no one would tell me. I asked Lt. J. Smith First & then Capt. Warlow, & on to Dep. Chief J. O. Barnett but until this time no one told me any reason. On April 4 I was due to report to my

regular Co. which is 5 Tr. Sta. at 474 So. Main at Butler, This Co. consist of 7 men & it can not operate with less than 5 men on this day we only had 5 men & I was included so we didn't have a man available for a detail. Plus the 31's have been riding with 4 men & they did that day for the capt. was in and out, at will. I was due to return to #31 April 6 for duty but I was so ful & confused I did not go, This Co. operated with 4 men the whole 24 hrs. Day. I had to go & see the Dep. Chief, Chief Barnett asked me why I didn't show, I told him I didn't wake up. He said he didn't not believe me & he knew what I had on my mine so why didn't I tell him about it. He said I told the Capt. at #31 I was not coming to work, I told him I said I didn't want to come & I didn't want to. He checked my record & said do you realize this is the first time you have been late I said yes sir. He said well, do you want it to come out of your check or do you want to work your off day, I said I will work my off day, I did This because my wife is off from work sick from the effect of Dr. Kings Death & she will not be paid. I returned to work April 8th the Co. had 4 men & I made 5 on April 9th I work at the #28 eng. house & on the 10th I returned to #31 this made a 72 hr. stretch.

Men on Co. #31

	Day off
Capt. R. T. Wade	Fri.
Lt. W. A. Burrell	tue.
Dr. A. L. Myers	Vac. Wed.
Lt. W. J. Morris	mon.
Pvt. J. A. McGraw	Sat.
Pvt. J. H. Mullins	Thur

On April 10th the Co. had 6 men including me. W. J. Morris was detailed to the #11 tr. which make me wonder even more why I was moved. For the Co. that I am assigned to 5 Tr. only had 4 men & had to have a man detailed to it. On April 12th the Co. had 5 men including me one was sent insp. J. H. Mullins.

On April 14th the Co. had 6 men including me Two was detailed one to 35's Pumper & one 11 tr. J. H. McGraw. Joe Mullins.

Newsom stated that the firemen were armed after the start of the sanitation worker's strike. He said that police officers Willie Richmond and Edward Redditt were at the fire station observing Dr. King and supporters of the strike at the Lorraine Motel. Redditt told him that they were there for Dr. King's protection and he asked him why they were hiding in the fire station.

Newsom said he was a supporter of the sanitation workers and attended their rallies. He attended a rally on the night of April 3, 1968, which was his off day. When he returned home that night a note was there from Lt. Smith requesting Newsom to contact him regardless of the time. Newsom said he called and was ordered to report for duty on April 4, 1968, at the Engine Company No. 31 instead of fire station No. 2, his regular post of duty. Newsom stated that his attendance at the rally might have precipitated his transfer, but no one to this date had told him why he was transferred. Newsom said his detail caused his company to be short and caused the company at station No. 31 to be over strength. He further stated that at one time Lt. Barnett told him he was transferred at the request of the police department.

Newsom stated that he resigned from the fire department on April 18, 1968, because he had not made any progress in the department after 12 years and 8 months and because he had been detailed without any explanation. However, he reapplied to the fire department in 1970 and

finally returned to the fire department on July 23, 1973.