



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Memphis, Tennessee
November 15, 1968

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT;
RACIAL MATTERS

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On November 12, 1968, a first source advised that the Invader cell of the Black Organizing Project (BOP), over-all Black Power irresponsible militant element in Memphis, Tennessee, has undertaken a new composition currently being headed by a virtually new group of young Memphis Negroes headed by Lance ("Sweet Willie Wine," "Willie Wine," "Sweet Willie") Watson, who has surrounded himself with a new group of followers, including Roy Lee Turks, one John Smith (not to be confused with the former Invader leader, John Burrell Smith), Melvin Smith, and several others. The new John Smith is about 6 feet tall, has a drooping mustache, which droops over either side of his upper lip, has an extremely high Afro hairdo, and has claimed to be the Invader leader in North Memphis.

Source One added that the Invader group has been given office space in the Educational Building of the Clayborn Temple, 280 Hernando Street, which is operated by the AME Church, pastored by Rev. Malcolm D. Blackburn, who also is now working as an organizer for the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, which source noted had led a strike of some 1,000 Negro Memphis City Hospital employees which began September 21, 1968, and which technically ended November 8, 1968. Source One pointed out that it appeared that the strike leaders were using the Invaders as marshals in daily protest parades perpetrated by the hospital strikers and as a propaganda vehicle.

Source One added that "Wine" and his group have recently been attempting to raise money and have published a small booklet entitled "Swing Don't Sing" by "Sweet Willie Wine," price 50 cents. The preface to this booklet states that "Sweet Willie Wine" was born in Memphis; was formerly a pimp, thief, gangster, and preacher; that he participated in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Poor People's

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RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

march to Washington, D. C.; helped, along with other Invaders, to build Resurrection City; and claimed that he had appeared on numerous television shows such as "Today Show" and "Tell it Like It Is," out of New York City and "Check Point" out of Washington, D. C., and has spoken at numerous universities and schools such as Howard University, Alice Deal in Virginia, and other schools around the Washington section, and that he had appeared in numerous newspaper articles, including the "New York Times"; "Washington Post"; "Jet Magazine"; the "Commercial Appeal" and "Memphis Press-Scimitar," both Memphis, Tennessee; and in the Nation of Islam publication, "Muhammad Speaks." He claimed to be the founder of the Black United Front at Memphis, Tennessee, and claimed to have worked with such renowned black leaders as Stokely Carmichael, Sidney Poitier, Nancy Wilson, and others in the Poor People's Campaign.

The text of this book berates the white race, praises the black race, calls for black unity and militant opposition to the white race and the American system. He praised the "colored people" of Vietnam, who he claimed have been fighting for their freedom for 20 years, and berated the United States for its intervention therein, claiming that the United States has been responsible for the continuance of the Vietnam War at a fantastic cost of money and lives, and called for the United States to get out of Vietnam and spend this money on the poor blacks in the United States. He also attacked the police forces throughout the United States, the National Guard, and State Troopers, claiming that they had attempted to kill off scores of Negroes in the cities during recent riots. He then cited various American revolutionary leaders and national leaders of the past who have defended the right to revolution. In closing, "Wine" claimed he was going to form a Black United Front to include preachers, civic leaders, and black leaders of the city, and referred to the Invaders as the "people's army." He claimed that he had had long discussions with the Ambassador of Nigeria and Corky Gonzales and one Tanvoles regarding the Invaders and with various "brothers" in the West Indies, with the Blackstone Rangers of Chicago and with Stokely Carmichael of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee.

He defined Black Power as meaning "We want black people to have a voice in this government or get one you can have a voice in. We want black people to own land, stores, banks, and other businesses. We want Black people to have a voice in their community against sick policemen and their brutality. We will protect our black people from

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

that landlord who wants to put you out." He concludes, "We are going to invade upon this sick society and put our hands around its throat and squeeze until it is dead."

Source One added that "Wine" and his cohorts had had a series of bumper-type stickers which are phosphorescent, or readable in the dark, with the reddish-orange background bearing black printing, reading "Damn the Army Join the Invaders," and that "Wine" and his followers are also selling these for 50 cents each throughout the Memphis community.

Source One stated that these were printed at either the Johnson Printing Company on Hernando between Beale and Pontotoc, which is owned and operated by one Colorado Johnson, or by the Williams Printing Company at Hernando and Vance, operated by Alex Williams, who has a reputation, according to source, [REDACTED]. He stated this appeared to be flat-bed press-type material and that both of the above printing companies, who have done printing in the past for some of the black leaders, have this type equipment. He pointed out that the Minimum Salary Office of the AME Church, which does considerable printing and which is located adjacent to Clayborn Temple, does not have the equipment to turn out this type bumper sticker.

Source One stated on November 14, 1968, that on November 13, 1968, Charles Cabbage, the original leader of the Black Organizing Project and Invaders, claimed that he has actually not given up the leadership of the Invaders but is merely "laying low" inasmuch as he is under indictment for Selective Service and for Third Degree Burglary and that he is on a new mission of attempting to organize the so-called downtown groups and the Beale Street Committee for the "coming revolution." Source stated that in all seriousness it appears that Cabbage is "whistling in the graveyard" and is exaggerating his own importance, and that it appears that in recent weeks Cabbage has been living as a "hustler" in the downtown black area of Memphis, associating prominently with pimps, fences, and other people who are engaged in nefarious illegal acts such as prostitution, pushing of marijuana, and possibly passing of bad checks or fencing stolen goods. Source stated he had no specific proof of any specific violations on the part of Cabbage.

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

On November 13, 1968, Mr. Mervin Anderson-Smith, Manager of the Federal Office Building, 167 North Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, furnished to the Memphis FBI a bumper sticker type decal reading "Damn the Army Join the Invaders," which he said had been observed stuck to the inside door leading to the west patio of the ground floor of the Federal Office Building. He stated that he had been unable to find anyone who had seen anyone place this sticker on the door but understood that some Black Powerites had allegedly visited the Army Recruiting Station, ground floor, Federal Office Building, about the same time.

On November 13, 1968, Sergeant James Edward Taylor of the Army Recruiting Station, Room 56, Federal Office Building, advised Lieutenant E. H. Arkin, Intelligence Bureau, Memphis Police Department, and a representative of the FBI that about 1:00 p.m. four or five Negroes, identifying themselves as connected with the Invaders, came into his office, all seemingly talking at once, and one indicated that he had received a letter from the Army wanting him to come into the office. Taylor stated that this would not be true. He stated that these four or five individuals bragged that they had burned Army recruiting material and had burned draft cards, all laughed, made fun of the Army, made fun of the Federal Government, indicated that they wanted to obtain office space in the Federal Office Building in order that they could recruit for "their army" as the United States Government was providing space for the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, and Air Force, to recruit in the Federal Office Building, and that this was a discrimination against the Invaders, or words to this effect. One of those present indicated that he had been in the Army, claiming he had been in the 11th Airborne Division during the Korean conflict.

This group had a stack of Invader stickers reading "Damn the Army Join the Invaders," identical to the one found by Mr. Anderson-Smith, having them in a briefcase. One of these individuals exhibited page 195 of the December, 1968, issue of "Esquire" magazine to Sergeant Taylor.

This particular article was captioned "The Face of Protest--1968," text and drawings by Harvey Dinnerstein, sub-captioned "It Was Black, White, Red, American and Angry," and related to the May and June, Washington, D. C., Poor People's Campaign. The first page of the article,

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

namely page 195, December, 1968, "Esquire," contained a drawing of "Sweet Willie" of the Memphis Invaders, and in part mentioned, "Now the style is that of 'Sweet Willie' (Lance Watson) of Memphis (left)." The import of his article indicated that militant black revolution is the coming thing and that "Sweet Willie Wine" symbolizes this black militancy.

Sergeant Taylor stated that "Wine" was extremely proud of this article and the fact that he had received nation-wide publicity as a result thereof. The group remained in the Army Recruiting office about 10 minutes, and while in there, a prospective Army recruit, a male Negro, was executing papers preparatory to enlisting in the Army. He was Earnest Cornelius Becton, 1502 Lake Grove, Memphis, Tennessee, who planned to enlist in the Army November 14 or 15, 1968. One of "Wine's" group seemed to recognize Becton, or at least pretended to recognize him, and made a sarcastic remark to Becton that he had no business joining the "honkie" Army, that he should get up and leave and come and join the army of the Invaders.

Sergeant Taylor stated that Becton tactfully, firmly and politely told the Invaders that he wanted nothing to do with them, and he continued to execute his papers and that efforts of the Invaders appeared to have no effect whatsoever on Becton.

A series of photographs of Invaders were shown to Sergeant Taylor, and the only photograph he could specifically pick out was that of Lance "Sweet Willie" Watson.

On November 13, 1968, Mrs. Jessie R. Evans, U. S. Civil Service Commission Office, Room 37, Federal Office Building, advised that about 2:00 p.m. on that date she saw a lone male Negro standing in the lobby near the elevator and about 10 minutes later saw him by the doors leading to the west terrace or patio of the office building, at which point the Invader sticker was found. She did not see this individual place the sticker but did later see him go into the office of the U. S. Air Force.

On November 13, 1968, Sergeant Charles McCrae of the U. S. Air Force Recruiting Office, ground floor, Federal Office Building, advised that he had determined that this individual was one Calvin Moore, who had come

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

into the office with one Harold Scott who was enlisting in the Air Force. He stated that he (McCrae) had later seen the Invader group, although he did not talk with them, and stated definitely that Harold Scott and Calvin Moore had no connection whatsoever with the Invaders.

He stated that he understood that the Invader group had gone into the Marine Recruiting Office next door.

On November 13, 1968, Sergeant Michael R. Oldham and Lance Corporal Joseph D. Kinney and Sergeant Robert Hill of the U. S. Marine Corps Recruiting Station, all advised that the Invaders had come into their office early in the afternoon of November 13, 1968, probably about 2:00 p.m. There were five of them. They had with them a briefcase on which were affixed several bumper-type stickers, reddish-orange in color with black printing reading "Damn the Army Join the Invaders." They also bragged that one of them had gotten a letter from the Marine Corps of a recruiting nature and had answered the letter stating that he had wanted to join the Marine Corps so he could learn to use guns to kill white people. The whole group in a facetious, sarcastic manner, virtually all talked at once along these same lines, to the effect that they wanted to learn how they could join the Marine Corps, learn to shoot guns, and later go to war with white people, whom they consider their enemies.

Oldham, Kinney, and Hill identified four of the five from photographs shown to them as Melvin Smith, Roy Lee Turks, Lance "Willie Wine" Watson, and John Smith (the one with the drooping mustache). They could not identify the fifth person. The three interviewees pointed out that the group with Watson exhibited Watson's drawing and write-up on page 195 of the December, 1968, issue of "Esquire" Magazine. One of them, name not recalled, saw a sign reading "America, Love It or Leave It," and on seeing this sign, stated that their answer to that was that they would "burn America."

Sergeant Hill stated that the Marine Corps Recruiting Office had recently received a letter postmarked Memphis, Tennessee, October 15, 1968, addressed to Marine Corps Recruiting Substation, Room 30 and 36, Federal Office Building, 167 North Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee 38103, bearing the typewritten return address, Roy Lee Turks, 2376 South Dexter, Memphis, Tennessee, containing a

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

typewritten letter dated October 11, 1968, addressed to Marine Corps Recruiting Substation, Room 30, Federal Office Building, 167 North Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, reading as follows:

"Greetings Mr. Honkie:

"I am sorry you did not send me my letter before now. I have been waiting for an opportunity to choose a branch of service, that will let me go into my thing. Can you promise me weapons for my people, while I am fighting in Vietnam.

"I want any branch of service that will let me shoot the Honkies in their backs and get away with it. I want to go to fight for my country, because I will be trained to fight when I get back to my country.

"Black people need me to fight for their country and this is my country and my war is here. So, anything you can do to help me get in the arms forces I will be very thankful, because I need to get there to preach Black Power and tell my black brothers that when the war is over there, it has just started here.

"Yours sincerely

"/s/ Roy Lee Turks

"Minister of Defense for the Invaders Roy Lee Turks"

The lower left-hand of the letter bore the typing, "cus:RLT," apparently Roy Lee Turks.

Lieutenant Arkin, as well as Source One, advised that the "cus" is undoubtedly Cacheatuh Smith, a recent graduate of Carver High School, female Negro, who is now serving as the secretary and office worker for the Invaders and who works in the current Invader office in the Educational Building of Clayborn Temple, CME Church.

Sergeant Hill advised that he had never sent any material to Turks and that Turks apparently had used this as a pretext to write a "smart aleck" letter to the Marine Corps, and he offered the opinion that Turks was probably trying to go on record with the Federal Government as a security risk in order that he would not be taken into the Armed Forces. He pointed out that this was merely conjecture on his part.

RE: BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT

On November 14, 1968, a second source advised that Roy Lee Turks, using local address 2376 Dexter Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, 38108, is registered for Selective Service with Local Board 88, Chicago, Illinois, and was originally ordered by Local Board 88 to report for Armed Forces Physical Examination, May 14, 1968, in Chicago. Turks subsequently had his examination transferred from Chicago to Memphis, having Selective Service Number [REDACTED] having it transferred to Local Board 105, Memphis, Tennessee, and was subsequently examined at the Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Station, Memphis, on September 27, 1968, and was found qualified for military service. Source Two pointed out that it was not known when Turks will be called up for induction.

Source Two had no other information concerning Turks and could not personally recall him.

Lieutenant Arkin advised on November 13, 1968, and again on November 14, 1968, that there had been no other instances reported to the Memphis Police Department relative to the use of the hereinbefore quoted stickers of the Invaders and that his department had received reliable information that the stickers were printed at the Johnson Printing Company on Hernando Street, mentioned hereinbefore, but did not have actual proof of this.

(A characterization of BOP appears in the Appendix.)

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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 Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee (SNCC) leaders H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael but that BOP did not necessarily exist as a formal SNCC unit. CABBAGE further admitted he had 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 Burrell 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 pray your way out."

On June 6, 1968, the second source advised that BOP primarily consists of about 30 to 35 young college and high school students and school dropouts, unemployed and not looking for work, who continually preach hatred of the white race and capitalistic economic system and advocating and predicting violence by blacks. The over-all 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.



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Character: RACIAL MATTERS

Reference: Memorandum prepared at Memphis,
Tennessee, on November 15, 1968,
captioned as above

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furnished reliable information in the past.

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