

Mr. Paul Valentine  
The Washington Post  
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Dear Paul,

Your current series reminds me of some agent provocateur activity. My recollection may be too hazy but for what it may be worth this is what I recall.

Some years ago when I was in Sammie Abbott's office (296-4350) there were several black men there. Sammie was doing some art work for them. He introduced us and told them of my work on the King assassination. They were organizing some kind of commemorative meeting, Dr. King's birthday or an anniversary of his death. Not sure. Maybe some other subject. Anyway, the one of the two I recall fairly clearly, a rather substantial type, asked me what I'd say if they asked me to speak. I said I'd speak critically of the failure of the black community to have any genuine interest in that assassination. He liked that and asked me to speak.

The meeting was at Rev. Wendt's church, I think on a Saturday afternoon. Quite early this man came to me at the church and told me there had been a threat against any monkey who would dare to say a word at all critical of any blacks. This threat came from what I recall as some kind of ~~xxxx~~ 14th St. gang of supposed Black Panthers. I was asked not to say what I'd planned to avoid trouble and I agreed. Then I was delayed on the speakers list and asked to speak about two minutes only and again I agreed. I was close to the last of a long list.

My only clear recollection of the other speakers is that the editor of the Quicksilver Times had to be crazy of a police provocateur. His was pretty violent stuff. Extreme as hell. I didn't know him.

About as soon as the meeting was over I returned home.

Later I was told that those from whom the threat came had been chased out of town by the Black Panthers of whom they were or pretended to be part. I am pretty sure that the Panther organization believed one or more of these unknown 14th-Streeters (that is, unknown to me) was a provocateur. I am also pretty sure that they had a reputation for violence but ~~xxx~~ were themselves threatened by black men whose capability of doing violence to them was beyond question. Maybe it is that the real Panthers had or brought in an enforcer, one whose warning would be heeded. I am clear on two things: the threats to me came from those who were regarded as tough characters capable of causing the violence at the church they threatened; and they were chased the next day by one or more whose credentials needed no authentication.

I have no way of knowing whether these tough guys whose purposes were, pretty clearly, disturbance, were police agents. Or if it will interest you. If it does maybe Sammie will recall the incident and the man who impressed me as a pretty solid-type citizen. My recollection is ~~mt~~ of a man not less than 5'9", about 160 lbs, maybe a little more, and not less than about 40 years of age. Not a kid.

Sammie is one of those whose supposed radical ideas have become the accepted beliefs of a majority of the community. He was then giving leadership on many issues, especially freeways and black rights. I'll be surprised if he was not a major target of any intelligence operations.

My recollection includes the seriousness with which the threat against me and the meeting/church were taken by those who organized the meeting, especially this one black man. My impression at the time was that too many of the speakers fit what I recalled of my days investigating private-detective provocateur operations of the 1930s.

Best,

The Washington Post

# METRO

Local News

SATURDAY, JULY

## Witnesses Say Police Agents

By Paul W. Valentine

Washington Post Staff Writer

A former undercover policeman and an antiwar leader told a D.C. City Council committee yesterday that police operatives used disruptive and violence-provoking tactics in street demonstrations and antiwar meetings in the early 1970s.

Rich Pollock, an unemployed freelance journalist and close associate of antiwar leader Rennie Davis in the May Day organization, testified he observed undercover D.C. police informant Anne Kolego Markowich urging demonstrators to take violent action.

James Binsted, 33, a former D.C. intelligence officer, also testified that police superiors "told us to disrupt."

Police officials denied Binsted's claims and Mrs. Markowich could not be reached for comment on Pollock's claims.

The testimony came in the second day of hearings by the Council's public safety committee into operations of the police department's intelligence division.

Six subpoenaed police officers refused to appear before the committee Thursday, and the Council formally asked the D.C. Superior Court to enforce subpoenas with contempt proceedings if necessary.

Superior Court Acting Chief Judge William S. Thompson set a hearing in the matter for Sept. 3, following the Council's month-long recess in August.

Other police officers continued yes-

terday to defy the Council committee's attempts to have the police tell of their undercover work and surveillance activities.

One officer refused to name the organization in which she had planted informants.

Another officer, who acknowledged the Black Panther Party and the "Black United Front" were infiltrated here, would not specify if the informants were black or white when instructed by committee chairwoman Willie Hardy (D-seven).

Earlier, Pollock of the May Day organization testified that Mrs. Markowich encouraged demonstrators without success to jump the fence at the White House during a civil disobedience protest in October, 1971, unsuc-

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## Used Disruptive Tactics

cessfully urged a group marching on the Pentagon to detonate a bomb in the building in April, 1972, and shouted encouragement to demonstrators throwing rocks and bottles at police during a mass rally at the Capitol in October 1971.

Known in antiwar circles as "Crazy Annie" because of her high strung personality, Mrs. Markowich was a familiar figure in the administrative offices of many antiwar organizations.

Binsted described numerous instances in which he said he was asked by his superiors to disrupt antiwar activity.

For example, he said, "My partner was a yippie (a member of the Youth International Party). He was loud and rhetorical, and I would come in and

try to break up meetings . . . get into fights, that kind of thing."

"Were you given instructions by the intelligence division on how to break up meetings?" asked Mrs. Hardy.

"No, I grew up at 14th and Park Road (NW)," answered the long-haired Binsted. "I don't need any instructions on how to disorganize anything."

Binsted outlined to Council members several other undercover escapades reported in the press earlier this year when he "surfaced" and met with reporters.

Police officials have repeatedly said all officers and paid informants were under specific instructions not to disrupt or incite violence while monitoring groups.

Earlier yesterday, two police officers

described general surveillance operations against antiwar and civil rights groups but refused to be specific about their informants.

With an attorney at her side, Sgt. Dixie Gildon said disclosure of infiltrated organizations could lead to identification of her sources and "put them in jeopardy" including physical harm.

Her attorney, Leonard Burka, also contended that questions about informant identity were beyond the scope of the hearings, called to examine only the "regulatory framework" of the intelligence division.

"There is no legislative purpose in disclosing the names," he argued.

Committee member David Clarke

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(D-one) countered that the City Council has "plenary legislative power" to make broad investigations.

At another point, Edward Webb, the Council's chief legal adviser, told Burka, "Simply saying that danger may exist does not excuse the witness from answering the question."

The dispute was set aside temporarily when committee members agreed to let Sgt. Sildon discuss with her superiors possible disclosures of the names next week in executive session.

Another officer, Detective Herman Oglesby, refused to specify the race of two informants who infiltrated the Black United Front, a loose coalition

of local black activists, and the D.C. chapter of the Black Panther party.

"I'd rather not answer that question," said Oglesby.

"Please answer the question," said Mrs. Hardy.

"I'm not going to answer," he insisted. "I'd rather talk to my attorney first."

"I don't think Detective Oglesby should be able to pick and choose the questions he's going to answer," said council member Marion Barry (D-at large).

Again, the dispute was deferred when the committee agreed to let Oglesby return next week under subpoena with an attorney.

Judge Thompson, in setting a hearing date on the issue of Council sub-

poena power and enforcement, said that the case did not constitute an emergency. "The District Building and the court house are not going to burn down," he said.

He ordered the opposing attorneys to file written memorandums on the issues by Aug. 15 in preparation for a full hearing that could establish the precedent on the Council's power to subpoena witnesses.

Attorneys for the subpoenaed police officers contend the Council has not assured the officers of various procedural safeguards in testifying about sensitive issues of intelligence gathering, including the right to counsel and protection of sources.