

Memorandum of Telephone Interview of Frank Holloman

On September 15, 1976, the undersigned telephoned Mr. Frank Holloman, former Director of Fire and Police, Memphis, Tenn. I identified myself as a Department of Justice Attorney assigned to the Attorney General's Task Force investigating the FBI's investigation of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and stated that I would like to ask him some questions. Mr. Holloman said that he would cooperate in any way he could, and related the following information.

(b) (7) (C)

Mr. Holloman said that he came to Memphis in August of 1959 and was the SAC of the Memphis FBI office until the Spring of 1960 (b) (7) (C)

He retired from the FBI in July of 1964. For about two years thereafter he was Director of Development at Memphis State University. In 1966 he became Executive Director of the Mid-South Medical Center Council for Comprehensive Health Planning. From January 1, 1968 until October 31, 1970, he was Director of Fire and Police for the City of Memphis.

As far as he can recall, Mr. Holloman said the Tactical units of the police department were organized in January or February of 1968 for the purpose of avoiding riots which other cities, such as Detroit, had experienced. After the Sanitation Workers Strike began, the units were used to escort garbage trucks in their efforts to pick up trash.

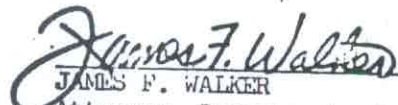
Mr. Holloman stated that Fire Station No. 2 on N. Main Street was used as a surveillance post in an effort to protect Dr. King. He said police officers had met Dr. King at the airport when he arrived in Memphis and offered him protection which he refused. Mr. Holloman believes Dr. King and his aides felt the police were attempting to spy on their activities in connection with the strike. Thus, he said, the police resorted to observing Dr. King and his group from the fire station. According to Mr. Holloman, this surveillance post had not been used before Dr. King arrived and refused protection. Mr. Holloman said a physical inspection of the general area was not made because the police did not know where Dr. King was planning to stay prior to his arrival.

With respect to the removal of officer Edward Redditt from duty at the fire station surveillance post on the afternoon of April 4, 1968, Mr. Holloman stated that he was in a court hearing, relating to the injunction against further marches, until about 5:00pm. When he returned to his office he was advised that a threat had been made on officer Redditt's life. He does not remember whether Redditt was already in his office or whether he ordered him to come in at that time. Nevertheless, Holloman said he advised Redditt of the threat and ordered him to move his family into a motel under an assumed name. He does not know whether Redditt followed the orders. The information about the threat had been received by other officials, probably Chief of Police McDonald, while he was in Court. Mr. Holloman said he does not know the source of the information, but recalls that it was from some government agency. After Dr. King was shot and the riots started he was busy restoring order to the city and the matter of the threat was out of his hands.

Mr. Holloman stated that he does not recall having any knowledge of the transfers of firemen Norvell Wallace and Floyd Newsom from fire station no. 2 on the day prior to Dr. King's assassination. He said he has since learned from questions asked him by newspaper people that they were transferred, but he had no knowledge of the transfers at the time.

In response to questions about informer coverage of the "Invaders", Mr. Holloman said that the only informer the Memphis police had was Marrell McCollough who had infiltrated the organization for the purpose of finding out what they were going to do.

Mr. Holloman indicated that he desired a copy of the memorandum of interview since he had read that the House of Representative was contemplating an investigation. He stated that he could possibly be interviewed by them and he would want to know what he had said to me. I advised Mr. Holloman that I did not think this would be a problem, but the request would have to be cleared with the Task Force Leader.


JAMES F. WALKER
Attorney, Department of Justice

FRANK C. HOLLOMAN


September 20, 1976

Mr. James F. Walker
Attorney
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Washington, D. C. 20530

Dear Mr. Walker:

Pursuant to our telephonic conversation on the morning of September 17, 1976, I am enclosing a copy of a letter dated July 17, 1968, from Inspector G. B. Tines, Inspectional Bureau, Memphis Police Department, to Assistant Chief W. E. Rouff entitled "Security and surveillance of Dr. Martin Luther King from time he arrived in Memphis on April 3, 1968, until he was assassinated on the evening of April 4, 1968" which, I hope, will be helpful to you in your investigation.

Sincerely,


Frank C. Holloman

FCH:GW
Enclosure ✓

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