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MM 44-270

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent JOSEPH I. GREALY on January 25 and 26, 1952, at Hollywood, Florida.

**BASIS:** Interview ARTHUR SHIPMAN, member of the Board of Directors, Progressive Voters League of Florida, Inc. for any information he may have relating to this case and any threats made against victim HARRY T. MOORE who was Executive Secretary of this organization.

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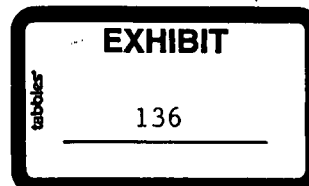
ARTHUR EVERETT SHIPMAN, 2215 Cody Street, Hollywood, Florida, advised he is presently employed with the Seaboard Railroad at the Fort Lauderdale, Florida, station as a baggage man.

He stated he was a member of the Board of Directors of the Progressive Voters League of Florida, Inc. at Hollywood, Florida, and that he had come in contact with HARRY T. MOORE through his activity with this organization. SHIPMAN stated he had known MOORE since 1948 but never had occasion to meet or become acquainted with his wife, HARRIETT MOORE. He stated he was not intimately acquainted with MOORE and only knew him through his contact at meetings of the Progressive Voters League of Florida, Inc. He pointed out that the meetings of this group were held at Ocala, Florida.

With regard to any close friends of the victim, SHIPMAN stated the only individual he could suggest would be EDWARD D. DAVIS who resides in Ocala, Florida.

SHIPMAN pointed out that MOORE was highly regarded and respected by the members of the Progressive Voters League of Florida, Inc. and he personally never knew MOORE to have any enemies. He added he was never aware of anyone having made any threats against MOORE.

In connection with the incident that had taken place in this case, SHIPMAN stated that since it happened he has thought the matter over very carefully in his mind and has no idea whatsoever who could have caused the death of HARRY MOORE and his wife. SHIPMAN pointed out that he is anxious to help in any way he can in this matter and in the event any information comes to his attention he will bring same immediately to the attention of this Bureau.



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IV. INVESTIGATION RE SUSPECT TILLMAN H. BELVIN

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agents FRANK F. MEECH and JAMES P. SHANNON on January 26, 1952, at Orlando, Florida.

BASIS: JAMES CICERO EVERETT was interviewed inasmuch as he was identified by TILLMAN BELVIN as an influential Klansman who was instrumental in electing BELVIN as Exalted Cyclops in order to combat the radical element of the Klan.

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JAMES CICERO EVERETT, 47 Halbe Avenue, Orlando, who is a real estate salesman associated with the Don Asher Realty Company on North Orange Avenue, furnished the following information:

He exhibited card number 74567 showing membership in the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, location 7-1-002, being paid up until December, 1952.

EVERETT, who is 33 years of age, born in Georgia, has been in the Orlando area thirty years and has known TILLMAN "CURLY" BELVIN all his life through his, EVERETT's, father who was active in the old Klan with BELVIN. EVERETT admitted being the Exalted Cyclops of various Klaverns of the different organizations of the Klan three or four times and was the Exalted Cyclops of the Orlando Den of the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan until BILL HENDRIX decided to run for Governor sometime in April, 1951.

About three or four years ago the members of the Florida Klan had a dispute as to whether or not to go into the Association of Georgia Klans or the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. At that time EVERETT was of the opinion TILLMAN BELVIN was the man who could do more than anyone else to hold the Florida Klan together. EVERETT was interested in preventing the members of the Florida Klan from joining either the Georgia Klan or the Southern Knights, believing that they should be one Klan and he thought TILLMAN BELVIN could work with all Klansmen in Orlando because he was such an old, active and reliable member of the Klan. It was EVERETT's understanding that BELVIN at first stayed with the old group and would not go into the Association of Georgia Klans or the Southern Knights. He claimed he has been out of touch with BELVIN for the past six years (which is probably a misstatement as he and BELVIN were in the Florida Klan together four years ago.)

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When the members of the old Florida Klan started to split into the two groups, the Georgia Klan and the Southern Knights, the Florida chapter ceased to exist but a fund was set up in order to pay the various fees to maintain the old Florida state chapter on file in Tallahassee.

EVERETT claimed he went over to the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan because it was a more democratic organization, conducting elections on a local, state and national basis whereas in the Association of Georgia Klans certain men set themselves up as the Association leaders and the membership had no choice. He claimed the Association of Georgia Klans has an imperialistic way of doing things and that one man (SAM ROPER) is "high and mighty". EVERETT heard that after the Groveland incidents there was a further split-up in the Georgia Klan in the Orlando area but he has no specific or accurate information to furnish on that split-up.

He does not think that any official organization of the Klan took official action at the time of the Groveland incidents in the summer of 1949 but believes the incidents occurred spontaneously before any of the Klans could actually take any official or unofficial action. It is his conviction that Sheriff WILLIS McCALL was being handed a "rough deal" by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People who were flooding money into the Lake County area in order to annoy and harrass McCALL.

He further related that after the Florida Klan split into the Georgia Klan and the Southern Knights there was considerable argument as to who should use the clubhouse on Winter Garden Road. He stated that the Southern Knights at Orlando voted to forego any interest in the clubhouse and the Georgia Klans at Orlando finally took over the use of the clubhouse.

EVERETT attended the official meetings of the Orlando Den of the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan regularly until April, 1951 when BILL HENDRIX, the leader, announced that he was a candidate for governor of Florida. EVERETT advised he does not believe Klans should be used as a political football, that he has never been able to get along with BILL HENDRIX and has been a "thorn in HENDRIX's side".

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The only meeting of the Southern Knights EVERETT has attended in the past six months was the one meeting just before Christmas, 1951. EVERETT claimed he has never been on a "ride", knows nothing of "rides", and explained that such activities are never discussed in the Klavern, no one knows anything about them officially and it is a Klan rule that whoever engages in a "ride" is on his own.

There is one Den of the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Orlando, one Den in Apopka, but none in Winter Park, Florida, according to EVERETT.

When questioned concerning HARRY MOORE and the Mims explosion EVERETT advised that his wife has told him that HARRY MOORE is mentioned in the book "The Scottsboro Boy". He stated he had read the book some time ago prior to instant crime but did not recall the name being used. He stated the name HARRY MOORE meant nothing to him until after he read it in the newspaper after MOORE was killed in the explosion at Mims. He knows nothing of any persons who are terrorists or who might have engaged in such an act as instant crime. He claimed he has tried to get away from that element and that is one of the reasons he left the group in Orlando to join the Southern Knights.

EARL BROOKLYN was a prominent member of the group that joined the Georgia Klan and generally was opposed to the group which EVERETT supported.

He remarked that "when you can't sit down and talk and reason with a person you shouldn't have anything to do with him but leave him alone", referring to EARL BROOKLYN. He further described BROOKLYN as a "brute" who "look pretty good to a kid who might think he was a different type of person. He characterized BROOKLYN as a "brute" and a "pretty rugged character" who wants his own way, had his own radical ideas and could not be dissuaded from it. He was never able to reason with EARL BROOKLYN who was of the type who would be inclined to take the law into his own hands in certain cases, such as a case that might involve a person molesting a child. It would be BROOKLYN's belief that the molester should be beaten rather than brought to court. He said he did not want to have anything to do with persons like EARL BROOKLYN and this was one of the reasons he went over to the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

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Mr. EVERETT in reply to a specific question advised that EDDIE JACKSON was one of the younger persons of a group in the split-up who stayed with the Association of Georgia Klans. He knows nothing of the Klan activities of EDDIE JACKSON. He further advised that the name FRED REISNER sounded familiar and volunteered that the Klans in Apopka broke into two factions of the Georgia Klan and the Southern Knights at about the same time as the Groveland incidents. He believed that "TINY" THOMAS who lives in Orlando and works in the A & P at Winter Park, who is about 6'2" tall and weighs 235 pounds, is a very nice fellow, is a member of his, EVERETT's, Den and "could be Exalted Cyclops".

Mr. EVERETT, who was in the service under U. S. Air Force Serial Number 14052613, appeared to be a responsible and reputable citizen. He insisted that he knows nothing of the bombing of MCCRE's home and has never seen or heard of any floor plans or diagrams of the MCCRE home at any time.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

To: COMMUNICATIONS SECTION.

JANUARY 28, 1952

URGENT

Transmit the following message to: SAC, MIAMI

JUNE 17

UNSUBS, HARRY T. MOORE, ET AL., VICTIMS, CR. REURTELS JANUARY TWENTY THIRD AND TWENTY FOURTH. YOU SHOULD CONSIDER ADVISABILITY OF PLACING SUSPECTS EARL BROOKLYN, T. H. BELVIN, ALFONSO F. SCHMITT, AND ROBERT L. JUDAH AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THIS RENEGADE KLAN GROUP UNDER PHYSICAL SURVEILLANCE DURING HOURS THEY MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN KLAN MEETINGS OR ACTIVITIES. ALSO CONSIDER ADVISABILITY OF ADDITIONAL TESURS. THESE INDIVIDUALS APPEAR TO BE VERY GOOD SUSPECTS AND EVERY POSSIBLE INVESTIGATIVE LEAD SHOULD BE COVERED IN REGARD TO THEM. HAVE O. K. WASHINGTON AND OTHERS IN MIMS, FLORIDA, BEEN ABLE TO IDENTIFY PHOTOGRAPHS OF ANY OF THESE SUSPECTS AS BEING IDENTICAL WITH THE TWO INDIVIDUALS WHO VISITED MIMS IN JULY OR AUGUST, FIFTYONE, INQUIRING ABOUT THE WHEREABOUTS OF HARRY T. MOORE.

HOOVER

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- Tolson \_\_\_\_\_
- Ladd \_\_\_\_\_
- Clegg \_\_\_\_\_
- Glavin \_\_\_\_\_
- Nichols \_\_\_\_\_
- Tracy \_\_\_\_\_
- Harbo \_\_\_\_\_
- Belmont \_\_\_\_\_
- Mohr \_\_\_\_\_
- Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_
- Holloman \_\_\_\_\_
- Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

COPIES DESTROYED  
R 815 JAN 22 1967

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 28 1951

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DETAILS:

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent H. WAYNE SWINNEY on December 28, 29, and 30, 1951.

AT ORLANDO, FLORIDA

1-29-52 ROSCOE L. LACEY, 542 W. Carter, immediate past president of the NAACP at Orlando, advised he attended the State Convention of the NAACP at Daytona Beach and at no time to his knowledge were there any outspoken or implied threats made to victim MOORE. LACEY stated MOORE was removed from his past position due to the lack of funds and no one was being considered to replace him.

LACEY further stated that the last contact he had had with MOORE was the Saturday night before the State Convention when MOORE stopped at his, LACEY's, home in Orlando and advised LACEY's wife that he, MOORE, would be back in thirty minutes. LACEY stated that MOORE never returned and when he spoke to MOORE in Daytona Beach he asked him why he did not come back whereupon MOORE stated that something had come up and he had to leave hurriedly. LACEY added that MOORE did not elaborate on what had come up. LACEY knew of no recent conventions or meetings of the NAACP held in Orlando at which MOORE was present nor did he know of any information concerning an allegation to the effect that MOORE had been chased out of Orlando from any meeting of the NAACP or other meetings. LACEY stated he knew of no suspects in the instant case; however, added that the local chapter of the NAACP had been having internal strife, none of which he thought would have perpetrated this crime.

JOHN P. ELLIS, Route 7, Box 372C, advised he is the president of the NAACP in Orlando and was at the State Convention of the NAACP in Daytona Beach. He further stated that there were no threatening remarks or strong agitation against MOORE at the convention and he considered himself to be MOORE's "strongest critic" at the convention. He stated he felt MOORE was not a big enough man to hold the office he had held and the said office had outgrown him. He further stated the office was discontinued because of lack of funds. According to ELLIS, MOORE was not aggressive enough, would not take issue on any subject and did not have the ability to handle the job.

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The following investigation was conducted by Special Agents FRANK F. MEECH and JAMES P. SHANNON on January 23, 1952 at Apopka, Florida:

BASIS: FRED REISNER was interviewed inasmuch as he is the Constable at Apopka, Florida, formerly a member of the Georgia Klan at Apopka and more recently affiliated with the Southern Knights.

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FRED REISNER, the Constable at Apopka, Florida, was interviewed but refused to furnish any information voluntarily to the Agents concerning the operation of the KLAN and, in fact, stated he would be unable to furnish the identity of any members of the Klan because of his "obligation" (referring to the Klan oath).

He admitted that there were two outfits in Apopka, one a Association of Georgia Klans and the other a lodge of the Southern Knights of the Klan. He stated he belonged to the Georgia Klan for years but that when it was supposed to be subversive he joined the Southern Knights.

FRED REISNER advised he had never heard of HARRY MOORE, knew nothing about the Mims case except what he read in the newspapers and that it was highly wrong to kill someone in that way.

He did state that JOE WADE (whom he evidently dislikes) joined the Association of Georgia Klans unit at Apopka when he, FRED REISNER, was in that unit. A group of the members of that unit headed by the head man (the Exalted Cyclops) believed that WADE was an erratic individual because of his statements and actions. FRED REISNER refused to elaborate on this statement.

After it was discovered that WADE and others held a secret meeting, a trial was held and WADE was banished. Shortly afterwards FRED REISNER and others left the Georgia Klan and joined the Southern Knights of the Klan. REISNER insists JOE WADE is not a member of the Southern Knights of the Klan. He does not like WADE's type inasmuch as they try to use the KLAN to violate the laws. Again REISNER refused to be specific.

FRED REISNER remarked that his brother, HARVEY REISNER, who only recently returned from the service, hangs out with JOE WADE much to the disapproval of FRED REISNER. FRED REISNER described EMMETT HART as a "pretty tough and rough customer" who used to do an awful lot of drinking and who, with JOE WADE, would be the type to do such a job as the Mims bombing.



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FRED REISNER made the following additional comments concerning individuals mentioned by the Agents:

ROY RAMSEY - doesn't know whether or not he belongs to the Klan;

HERMIT SMITH - doesn't believe he is a member of the Klan;

ALTON DIXON, Jr. - doesn't like him but believes ALTON DIXON Sr. is all right;

JOHN PIERSON - used to be on the Police Department at Apopka, doesn't think he is wild;

R. G. HOWELL - A Winter Garden, Florida man, brother-in-law to a R. A. LASSITER;

He believes LEE DAVIS comes from Winter Garden, as well as ALEX SCHMITT, looks like an Indian;

He doesn't like either BILL BOGAR or Old Man SHEPHERD, the latter a retired Navy man.

It should be noted that according to T-5 FRED REISNER is presently the Exalted Cyclops of the Southern Knights of the Klan at Apopka.