

FFM  
Covanda  
11/30/69

////STATEMENT////

On Tuesday night November 30, 1965, at approximately 2045 hours, Joseph Davis and I, Vernon Smith, went for a ride in the Negro section of town. We just rode around in the section. At about 2200 hours I was driving East on Maryland Ave, and I turned North on Fourth(4th) Street. I drove North to Caroline Avenue at which I turned West. At that time I noticed this vehicle which seemed to be following us. It seemed to be about five yards behind us. I kept driving East on Caroline Ave. until I reached Sixth (6th) Street. The vehicle also turned North. At that point I recognized it as being a car. When I reached Georgia Ave. I turned East. The car also turned. At about mid-way between Sixth Ave, and Fifth Street on Georgia Ave. I signaled to turn left (North). At that time I saw this red light which seemed to be rotating. I immediately pulled to the right of the Avenue and stopped. I got out of my car and went over to this car, which was a policeman's car. The officer got out and said, "Let's see your driver's license". I started getting my driver's license out of my billfold but the officer didn't stop to look at them. He went over to my car and with his flashlight he looked into the car. He told Joseph Davis to get out. There was a shotgun on the rear seat of the car. The shotgun was removed from the back seat of the by the officer after he unlocked the door. He then searched the car on the left side, under the seat (front), and under the instrument panel (dashboard). After that he went around to the right side of the car. He opened the front door and I looked into the glove compartment, which was unlocked. There was a 22 pistol in it, but for some reason the officer didn't see it. He also searched under the seat (front) and under the dashboard. He closed the doors and came over and put the shotgun in his car. He searched Joseph Davis and he searched me, taking a pin knife and a chap stick out of my pocket. He asked me, "Where were you going with that loaded shotgun?" I told him I was going home. He said, "Get into the car", We did. He took us to the Ferriday Jail. When he got there the officer called two different people (at least he made two different calls). When the officer finished his telephone conversations, he told Joseph Davis and me to take everything out of our pockets. We did. He asked again, "Where were you going with that loaded shotgun?" I told him I was going home. He locked Joseph Davis and me in a hallway (not a cell). We could see them (the officer and the jailer) through a small window in the door. The officer and the jailer went out and stayed for about ten or fifteen minutes. When they got back, the officer locked Joseph Davis and me into a four-man cell, which had four men (Negroes) in it before we went in. They also that night had eight (8) Negro men in a four man cell. There was one(1) cell with with white men(3) in it, also a four man cell. There were also three(3) Negro women in one cell. The sleep I got that night was done on the floor without a mattress or anything other than the clothes I had on ( a shirt and a pair of trousers). The next morning about 0900 the jailer came and got us out. He took us to his desk. That's where I saw all these things that were in my car on his desk. They brought my car up to the jail and took everything out, and I was not there to see,

They also went through my billfold and I was not there to see it. The Chief of Police told us to have a seat. He said the mayor was going easy on us this time. The chief got the serial numbers of the shotgun and the pistol and he said we were free to go and the next time we had a gun in the car to make sure it was unloaded. He said the reason we were picked up was because they had heard some shots and thought we had made them. The chief told us to go on home and forget all about it.

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