

STATE OF GEORGIA }
COUNTY OF FULTON } SS

AFFIDAVIT OF THE REVEREND WYATT TEE WALKER,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

RE: ARREST AND DETENTION IN THE SHREVEPORT CITY JAIL AND THE CADDO PARISH
JAIL IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA, JUNE 8 AND 9, 1962.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT:

(IT IS NECESSARY TO ENUMERATE SEVERAL PERTINENT FACTS PURSUANT TO MY
ARREST AND DETENTION BY SHREVEPORT AUTHORITIES IN ORDER THAT THE CHAIN OF EVENTS
MAY BE MORE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD IN THEIR PROPER FRAME OF REFERENCE.)

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA'S PRIMA^(N) INTEREST TO SCLC IS THE STRATEGIC NEED FOR
MEASURABLY INCREASING THE VOTING STRENGTH OF THE NEGRO COMMUNITY, THIS CONCERN
GROWS OUT OF A SECONDARY CONCERN - THE FLAGRANT ABUSE OF CONSTITUTIONAL GUARAN-
TEES AS THEY RELATE TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES, INTER AND INTRA-STATE BUS FACILITIES,
PUBLIC LIBRARIES, ETC., AND A WAVE OF LAWLESSNESS APPARENTLY CONDONED BY THE LOCAL
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS.

THE ^(HISH) INCIDENCE OF VOTING IRREGULARITIES IN THIS SECTION OF NORTH
LOUISIANA PROMPTED THE HEARING OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION OF 1960. SINCE
THEN, TWO OF THE KEY FIGURES WHO TESTIFIED BEFORE THE COMMISSION HAVE BEEN THE
OBJECT OF HARASSMENT THAT HAS DESTROYED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS OF REAL PROPERTY
AND VERY NEARLY RESULTED IN MURDER IN AT LEAST ONE INSTANCE.

AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON THE LIFE OF HARRY BLAKE ON OCTOBER 16, 1960, AND
NUMEROUS ARRESTS HAVE PUNCTUATED HIS LIFE SINCE THE HEARINGS. DR. C. O. SIMPKINS,
AN SCLC VICE-PRESIDENT, HAS BEEN OFFERED BRIBES, HIS LIFE THREATENED, CROSSES

BURNED AND MORE RECENTLY, A NEARLY-COMPLETED \$50,000.00 HOME WAS DYNAMITED FOLLOWED BY THE BOMBING AND BURNING OF A SUMMER LAKE-HOME. THOUGH POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION OF SOME OF THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE CAN BE MADE, NO ARREST OR INDICTMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE IN ANY OF THESE CASES TO DATE. IN SHORT, LAW AND ORDER (AS FAR AS THE NEGRO COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED) DOES NOT EXIST IN SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA.

TO THIS END, SCLS THROUGH A LANG-RANGE PROGRAM OF VOTER REGISTRATION, PLANS TO CHANGE THE POLITICAL CLIMATE. MEANWHILE, A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE NEGRO COMMUNITY IS TERRIFIED AND TERRORIZED BY THE PREVAILING LAWLESSNESS. THUS, THE COMING OF DR. KING AND HIS STAFF TO SHREVEPORT TO KICK OFF THE NEW EFFORTS IN VOTER REGISTRATION (DESPITE ALL OF THE EXTERNAL OBSTACLES NEGROES FACE - SO MUCH SO, THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HAS RECENTLY MADE A DEMAND FOR THE RECORDS OF THE REGISTRARS).

TWO AND ONE-HALF HOURS PRIOR TO OUR LEAVING ATLANTA, I RECEIVED A CALL FROM HARRY BLAKE THAT THE RACIST ELEMENT IN SHREVEPORT HAD THREATENED TO KILL DR. KING IF HE CAME TO SHREVEPORT. SOME OF HIS CLOSE ADVISERS, IN LIGHT OF SHREVEPORT'S TERRIBLE RECORD, ASKED THE PRESIDENT OF SCLC TO RECONSIDER GOING. DR. KING INSISTED THAT MORE THAN EVER NOW, WE MUST GO. WE TOOK ALL OF THE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN IN CIRCUMSTANCES LIKE THESE. WE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT COMMISSIONER J. EARL DOWNS HAD FLATLY REFUSED TO PROVIDE POLICE PROTECTION FOR "THAT NIGGER KING" AND WE SO ADVISED THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE THROUGH THE HEAD OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION, MR. BURKE MARSHALL. THE FLAT REFUSAL FOR POLICE PROTECTION REQUIRED SOME ESPECIAL VIGILANCE ON THE PART OF THE NEGRO COMMUNITY IN SHREVEPORT, PARTICULARLY AROUND THE SITE OF THE MEETING, THE LITTLE UNION BAPTIST CHURCH, THE REVEREND C. C. MCCLAIN, MINISTER.

WITH THIS BACKGROUND, WE CAN TURN NOW TO THE DEPOSITION ITSELF WHICH DESCRIBES THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS LEADING TO AND FOLLOWING THE ARREST OF HARRY BLAKE AND MYSELF.

DEPOSITION:

AT 8:15 P.M., JUNE 8, 1962, HARRY BLAKE AND I LEFT THE STUDY OF PASTOR MCCLAIN TO MAKE A LAST MINUTE CHECK OF THE MEN WHO HAD BEEN POSTED AROUND THE CHURCH TO NARROW THE POSSIBILITY OF FOUL PLAY DURING THE MEETING.

AS WE STOOD ON THE FRONT STEPS OF THE CHURCH, A LIEUTENANT TILLEY, CAME OVER TO US, INTRODUCED HIMSELF TO US AND PROCEEDED TO ADVISE US THAT THEY HAD DISPERSED ALL OF THE PICKETS AND EVERYONE HAD TO GO INSIDE (THE CHURCH). HE FURTHER EXPLAINED, POLITELY, THAT HE HAD TWENTY-FIVE MEN AND THAT "EVERYTHING WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF". I INQUIRED AS TO WHETHER HIS MEN WOULD ALSO GUARD THE REAR OF THE CHURCH. HE SAID HE WOULD FIND OUT AND LEFT TO TAKE PRESUMABLY WITH DOWNS, HIS SUPERIOR.

IN A MOMENT, DOWNS, ACCOMPANIED BY AN ASSORTED DOZEN OR MORE OF POLICE OFFICERS AND DEPUTY SHERIFFS, APPROACHED US AND BRUSQUELY ANNOUNCED, "G'WAN INSIDE!"

"ALL RIGHT, COMMISSIONER, BUT I'D LIKE TO ESTABLISH THAT THE REAR OF THE CHURCH IS GOING TO BE COVERED." I REPLIED.

"I DON'T WANT NO TALK," HE COUNTERED, "G'WAN INSIDE." "MR. DOWNS, " I ANSWERED, "YOU COULD BE GENTLEMAN ENOUGH TO ANSWER MY QUESTION. I WANT ONLY TO BE SURE ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE INSIDE THE CHURCH."

A VOICE IN THE GROUP ASKED, "SHALL I PUT 'EM IN THE WAGON?" "YEAH, PUT 'EM IN THE WAGON."

"WHAT'S THE CHARGE?" THE SAME VOICE ASKED.

"LOITERING." DOWNS REPLIED.

BLAKE AND I WERE PRISKED AND PLACED IN THE PATROL WAGON AND TAKEN TO THE SHREVEPORT CITY JAIL.

UPON ARRIVAL AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, THE DRIVER OF THE PATROL WAGON INFORMED THE POLICE MAJOR IN CHARGE THAT WE WERE CHARGED WITH LOITHEING AND THE WARRANTS WERE DRAWN AND THE NAMES OF J. HARVEY TEASLEY AND EARL DOWNS WERE AFFIXED AS THE ARRESTING OFFICERS. THE CONTENTS OF OUR POCKETS WERE TAKEN IN RETURN FOR WHICH WE RECEIVED PROPERTY SLIPS.

BLAKE AND I WERE THEN FINGERPRINTED. WHILE THIS WAS BEING DONE, THE POLICE MAJOR INFORMED US THAT WE WERE BEING TRANSPERRED TO THE PARISH JAIL. NEITHER

BLAKE NOR I KNEW WHY THEN. WE ASSUMED THAT THIS WAS ROUTINE.

AT THE COUNTY JAIL, THE SHERIFF ON DUTY IMMEDIATELY REFUSED TO ACCEPT US IN THE ABSENCE OF A SIGNATURE ON THE PAPERS OF TRANSFER (LATER WE LEARNED THAT THESE WERE CORONER'S COMMITMENTS). A CALL TO THE CITY JAIL ASSURED HIM THAT PROPERLY EXECUTED PAPERS WOULD BE SENT OVER, FORTHWITH. IT WAS THEN THAT WE LEARNED FROM AN ATTORNEY, JESSE STONE, THAT TEASLEY HAD TURNED OVER TO THE CORONER FOR OBSERVATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT WE WERE "MENTALLY COMPETENT".

DR. STUART DELEE WAS THE CORONER AND WE WERE ADVISED THAT HE MIGHT POSSIBLY COME DOWN AND EXAMINE US THAT VERY NIGHT. IT WAS NOW 9:10 P.M., AND MY SECOND REQUEST FOR A TELEPHONE CALL HAD NOT BEEN RESPECTED.

BOTH BLAKE AND I WERE PLACED IN A LARGE SIX-BED CELL, THREE WITH FILTHY MATTRESSES, THREE WITH NONE. A BENCH WAS ATOP A TABLE, PROBABLY INTENDED FOR EATING. THIS IS ALL WE WERE TO SEE BEFORE WE WERE PLUNGED IN DARKNESS. WE PARTIALLY UNDRESSED AND EXPLORED THE 20x20 AREA UNTIL WE LOCATED A FACE BOWL AND A MALFUNCTIONING AND OFFENSIVE TOILET COMMODORE.

WITHIN AN HOUR, BLAKE AND I WERE AWAKENED AND TOLD THAT THE CORONER HAD COME TO EXAMINE US. I WENT FIRST AND SAT IN THE CONSULTATION ROOM WITH THE CORONER, DR. DELEE AND MR. STONE, THE ATTORNEY.

DR. DELEE BEGAN HIS "EXAMINATION" BY GATHERING THE USUAL STATISTICS, METICULOUSLY WRITING DOWN EVERY DETAIL. AFTER GIVING COMPLETE INFORMATION ON MY PLACE OF BIRTH, BIRTH DATE, SCHOOLING, COLLEGE, OCCUPATION, ETC., DR. DELEE BEGAN HIS FORMAL EXAMINATION TO DETERMINE MY MENTAL COMPETENCE. SOME OF THE QUESTIONS ARE LISTED BELOW JUST AS THEY WERE ASKED:

"DO YOU BELIEVE IN INTERGRATION?

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IN INTERGRATION?

HAVE YOU ALWAYS BELIEVED IN INTEGRATION?

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BELIEVED IN INTEGRATION?

DID YOU SERVE IN THE MILITARY?

WHY WEREN'T YOU CALLED UP?

IF YOUR COUNTRY CALLED YOU IN THE SERVICE, WOULD YOU FIGHT?

IF YOU HAD THE CHOICE TO DEFEND THE STATE OF GEORGIA OR THE UNITED STATES, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

ARE YOU NERVOUS?

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN A MENTAL INSTITUTION AS A PATIENT?

DO YOU FEEL PEOPLE ARE AGAINST YOU?

DO YOU THINK I HATE COLORED PEOPLE ANY MORE THAN I HATE NORTHERN YANKEE BASTARDS?

ARE YOU A DRINKING MAN?

HAVE YOU HAD ANYTHING TO DRINK TONIGHT?

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE FREEDOM RIDERS?

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A MEMBER OF A PARTY THAT WAS CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY?

WOULD YOU JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY?

WHAT DO YOU THIN OF THE REVERSE FREEDOM RIDERS?

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT ~~THE~~ WHITE CITIZENS COUNCIL IS UN-AMERICAN)?

DO YOU THINK I WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOU?

WHY DO YOU SAY I'M A MODERATE SEGREGATIONIST?

YOU REALLY DO BELIEVE WHAT YOU SAY, DON'T YOU?"

THE INTERROGATION ENDED AFTER FORTY MINUTES OF THE ABOVE. OVER THE PROTEST OF MR. STONE, THE CORONER INDICATED HE WOULD HAVE TO QUESTION ME "TOMORROW" TO FIND OUT IF I WERE SANE. HE JUST COULDN'T TELL, ALTHOUGH I SEEMED TO HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS.

BLAKE'S QUESTIONING FOLLOWED FAIRLY MUCH THE SAME PATTERN. BLAKE REPORTED DR. DELEE'S CONSTERNATION THAT, "YOU'RE ONE OF US. HOW DID YOU GET MIXED WITH REVEREND KING AND REVEREND WALKER?"

WHILE BLAKE WAS BEING QUESTIONED, I AGAIN INSISTED ON MY RIGHT TO A TELEPHONE CALL. DEPUTY SHEPHERD TERRY, WHO HAD COME ON DUTY, COMPLIED IMMEDIATELY. I TELEPHONED MRS. WALKER IN ATLANTA WHO IN TURN ALERTED THE PROPER DIVISION HEADS OF OF THE STAFF AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION.

UPON BLAKE'S RETURN, WE JOINED IN A SERVICE OF PRAYER AND SONG THAT LASTED UNTIL MIDNIGHT. WE VOWED THAT WE WOULD NOT EAT OR DRINK UNTIL RELEASED.

SATURDAY MORNING AROUND SEVEN, WE WERE AWAKENED BY A TRUSTY WHO BROUGHT BREAKFAST. NEITHER BLAKE NOR I LEFT OUR COTS. AN HOUR LATER, THE TRUSTY RETURNED TO RETRIEVE THE UNDISTURBED TRAYS. THE SAME PROCEDURE FOLLOWED AT ONE O'CLOCK. STILL BLAKE AND I FASTED. WE WERE CONVINCED THAT WE WERE VICTIMS OF A MALICIOUS PLOT AND PREPARED OURSELVES TO STAY AS LONG AS NECESSARY. THIS WAS LOUISIANA'S WAY OF "TEACHING US A LESSON".

AT APPROXIMATELY 3 P.M., MY NAME WAS CALLED AND ONCE AGAIN I CONFRONTED THE CORONER, DR. DELEE. THIS TIME HE SEEMED HALTING AND CONFUSED AS TO WHAT TO ASK. WHEN I IGNORED A QUESTION THAT HE HAD ASKED ME THE NIGHT BEFORE, HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ME. I REPLIED THAT I WAS TIRED OF HIM PLAYING GAMES WITH ME. HE ASKED WHAT I MEANT. I ANSWERED BY REMINDING HIM OF OUR LAST EXCHANGE OF WORDS THE NIGHT PREVIOUS. HE SAID HE COULDN'T REMEMBER. I HAD SAID TO HIM THAT HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD MY MENTAL COMPETENCE WOULD BE EXACTLY THE SAME AS IT WAS ON OUR INITIAL MEETING, NO MATTER WHEN HE SAW ME AGAIN, TOMORROW, NEXT WEEK, NEXT MONTH OR NEXT YEAR. HE FLUSHED UNDER MY DIRECT APPROACH.

I THEN SAID TO HIM THAT HE WAS A PART OF THE TRAGEDY OF THE SOUTH. HE KNEW WHAT WAS RIGHT AND COULDN'T OR WOULDN'T DO IT; EITHER BECAUSE SOMEONE CONTROLLED HIM OR BECAUSE HE LACKED THE COURAGE. THE FUMBLE DEFENSE OF HIS POSITION PROMPTED ME TO SAY I SYMPATHIZED WITH HIM BECAUSE HE WAS CAUGHT UP IN THE EVIL SYSTEM (OF SEGREGATION). HE WAS SICK, I ASSERTED, AND PERHAPS I SHOULD BE QUESTIONING HIM. AT THIS JUNCTURE, THE EXAMINATION ABRUPTLY ENDED.

BLAKE'S QUESTIONING WAS EVEN MORE BRIEF AND SHORTLY THEREAFTER, A DEPUTY RE-ENTERED OUR CELL AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE CORONER HAD DECIDED THAT WE WERE NOT CRAZY AND WAS RELEASING US TO CITY AUTHORITIES.

AFTER TRANSFER TO THE CITY JAIL, OUR RELEASE WAS EFFECTED THROUGH POSTING OF

A CASH BOND SUPPLIED BY THE UNITED CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

AFFIANT

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO
BEFORE ME THIS 11TH DAY
OF JUNE, 1962.

NOTARY PUBLIC