

"Black Book" and "Secret Police" Is Nothing New

By: Nathaniel Marshall, Contributing Writer

On November 3rd, 1979, a group of worker rights advocates held a rally in the then all black neighborhood and subsidized housing area of Morningside Homes. These citizens were exercising their 1st Amendment rights granted by the United States Constitution. On that day, at high noon, white supremacist assassins, better known as the Ku Klux Klan, gunned them down. The Greensboro police knew or should have known about the assassins' plot but stayed away until the Klan's dastardly deed was complete.



Because of their conspiratorial complicity, the Greensboro Police Department (GPD) and the city of Greensboro were found guilty in Federal Court of violating the assassinated worker advocates civil rights. The survivors of those killed were awarded monetary damages for the federal constitution violations of life and liberty. The GPD had a Ku Klux Klan informant inside the Klan group working with them (GPD) several days leading up to the incident.

Twenty six years later, In June 2005, it was discovered that this same police department had officers who operated as a "secret police" that targeted 114 African-American residents of Greensboro that included 19 African American police officers that were maintained in a "black book."

The existence of the "secret police" and the "black book" began to unfold when an African-American policeman of the GPD, Lt. James Hinson discovered a tracking device placed in his cruiser in June of last year, 2005. The incident was made public and confirmed the long held beliefs in Greensboro's African-American community that institutional white supremacy existed and continues to exist in the GPD. The discovery of the "black book" and the existence of the "secret police" further confirmed the racial profiling and racial discrimination claims.

Chief David Wray's allegations of illegal wrongdoing by Hinson to justify the tracking device were proven false by previous police investigations and an outside independent probe.

Several black GPD officers filed a lawsuit 15 years ago claiming racial discrimination. They claimed among other allegations, that the GPD scrutinized the actions of black officers more stringently and showed a pattern and practice of discrimination toward black officers in the department. The most recent revelations resulted in the forced resignation of Police Chief David Wray and two of his deputy police officers. There is growing evidence that this "secret police" may have existed as far back as the late 1970s.

Rev. Nelson Johnson was the leader of the worker rights protestors on Nov. 3rd, 1979 and survived the Klan assassination

attempt on his life. Johnson testified at the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission in August 26, 2005, that there was a "rough" group of police officers that existed back in the late 1970s and possibly earlier. Johnson's evidence included sworn testimony in a 1983 case, the United States of America vs. Henry C. Byrd in which Henry C. Byrd alleged that a former police officer was a part of a "rogue" police group. Byrd claimed that he (Byrd) staged accidents including wrecking cars for insurance money and that a group of police officers worked with him. Byrd was involved in more than 39 accidents and alleged that a group of police officers worked with him on investigating the car wrecks and on certain drug deals.

Last year, 2005, the GPD hired a private detective firm made up of former police officers that included Byrd's "rogue" officer. It was this private detective firm that placed a tracking device on the police car of Lt. James Hinson. In Rev. Nelson Johnson's testimony, he set out—among other facts—that members of this "rogue" police (now retired)—one of whom placed the tracking device on Lt. Hinson's vehicle—had a secret meeting on October 31, 1979 at a police officer's home. At this meeting, they discussed the plot to assassinate the worker rights advocates that would take place on Nov. 3rd, 1979. He related that in a discussion soon after Nov. 3, that included at least one of the "rogue" officers on the force in 1979, he asserted he did everything he wanted to do except get the "nigger" (Nelson Johnson).

Secret police, racial profiling, rogue police, racial discrimination charges and race based bias lawsuits are reflective of years of denial by government leaders that nothing was wrong despite protestations over the years from black citizens stating otherwise. Interim Chief Bellamy is conducting his own investigation that he plans to complete within the next two months.

Law enforcement in America has always played a role in maintaining racism. Slave owners relied on the local sheriff and law enforcement to patrol for and capture runaway slaves, any resistance by the slave usually resulted in sudden death. J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI were notorious in spying on Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and other civil rights activists during the 1960s. Hoover's Cointelpro Program was designed to neutralize, discredit and otherwise render ineffective African-American leadership. Many criminologists and civil libertarians have growing circumstantial evidence that law enforcement was complicit in the deaths of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King.

Today the Klan mentality has become more main-stream. David Duke is an example of the new Klan mentality. Duke, a white supremacist, presented himself as a respectable three-piece suit conservative candidate for governor in the late 1980s and lost by a very narrow margin.

Obviously, there are David Duke's in the Greensboro Police Department that need to be identified and rooted out in order to establish a reputation worthy of most of the fine, dedicated men and women who presently work for the Greensboro Police Department.



Rev. Nelson Johnson




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On Sunday, March 12 2006
102nd Church Anniversary · Family & Friends Day
11:00 am Service with Pastor Walter McLaurin of
Lord Jesus House of Prayer Colonial Heights, Va.
A Fellowship Luncheon will be served
following the morning service.
4:00 Service with Dr. Paul Lowe, Jr. and the
congregation of Shiloh Baptist Church. Come join us in
this great celebration.

"A Church on The Move for God... Excited for Jesus"