



The FBI Oral History Project

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**Case History Memoir Donated by
Former Special Agent of the FBI
Kenneth Arnold (1959-1982)
in 2006**

FBI CIVIL RIGHTS INVESTIGATION OF VIOLENT CONFRONTATION
BETWEEN LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND
MEMBERS OF THE NATION OF ISLAM

Shortly after 12:00am on April 28, 1962, Los Angeles Police Department officers Stanley Kensic and Frank Tomlinson stopped their patrol car to investigate two men who were standing at the open trunk of a vehicle parked at 57th Street and S. Broadway. Kensic said they observed what they thought were items of clothing, and suspected a possible burglary. While questioning the men, one of them started a fight with the officers. Simultaneously, a number of men ran from the Nation of Islam, Mohammed's Mosque No. 27, located at 5606 S. Broadway, and joined the fight. In the ensuing fight Kensic lost his weapon and someone shot Tomlinson in the left upper arm with it. The bullet traveled down his arm and shattered his left elbow. Officers Richard Anderson and D. L. Weese arrived on the scene and tried to stop a man running from the scene of the fight back to the Mosque. Both were overpowered and Anderson was struck with a heavy water bottle.

Officer Tomlinson was able to reach his patrol car radio and summon help. Patrol units from three nearby LAPD divisions, as well as LAPD Headquarters Robbery and Metro details responded to the scene. Numerous shots were fired by the officers, some in response to those fired by a man exiting the Mosque with a rifle. During the confrontation, 75 police officers responded to the scene. When order was restored, one Nation of Islam member was dead, and five others were wounded and taken to a hospital. Officer Kensic's wound would lead to his disability retirement. He also suffered a possible skull fracture, as did officer Anderson. The LAPD detained 26 persons who were taken to the University Station for questioning. Sixteen persons were arrested by the LAPD and charged with assault with intent to commit great bodily harm.

When the incident was finally brought under control a crowd of nearly 200 persons had gathered.

In the aftermath of the incident the Los Angeles County District Attorney said a grand jury would be asked to investigate the matter because the riot was of great public concern. Several police officials opined, unofficially, that the confrontation was set up to cause friction between the black community and the LAPD. Chief of Police William Parker testified before the grand jury, and recommended a full investigation.

The extensive news coverage of the incident resulted in the US Department of Justice ordering an FBI Civil Rights investigation of the matter. Civil Rights cases in the Los Angeles Office were handled by Criminal Squad 7. This squad, generally known as the "Major Case" squad, handled Kidnap (7), Extortion (9), Civil Rights (44), Escaped Federal Prisoner/Parole Violator fugitives (76), Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution fugitives (88), and Bank Robbery (91) matters. The supervisor at the time was Odd T. "Jake" Jacobsen, later to be SAC, Albany, and Assistant Director, Inspection Division, FBIHQ – deceased – 1985.

The agents assigned to Squad 7 in 1963 were as follows:

Fugitive Matters:

John D. "Dave" Carroll, catcher on the FBIHQ baseball team in the 1950s –deceased - 1989
John F. "Jack" Grube, former police officer (possibly Berkeley, CA) – unknown, not a Society member
Paul Luther, a senior agent in the LA office with extensive criminal investigative experience –
Deceased -
Jerome W. "Jeb" Wright, a FBI National Academy graduate and one of the Bureau's "quick draw"
artists – deceased - 1984

Bank Robbery Matters:

C. Kenneth Arnold, later SAC, Anchorage

Jerome K. "Jerry" Crowe, courier who delivered ransom payoffs in the Frank Sinatra, Jr. and Kenneth Young kidnap cases; later a proponent of the FBI SWAT team concept, and first leader of the LA Office SWAT team

Paul W. Haymes, a native Texan and long-time squad member. Transferred to the Houston office in 1963 – deceased - 1992

Robert E. Kertin, later Police Training Coordinator and senior supervisor in the LA Office – deceased 2005

Roger J. "Frenchy" LaJeunesse, formerly of the NYO, and later FBI liaison to the LAPD in the RFK assassination investigation of Sirhan Sirhan – deceased - 2002

Edward A. "Big Ple" Pleavack, premier investigator, who saved the life of LA SAC John F. Malone when he reached over Malone's shoulder and shot a fugitive who had gotten the "drop" on Malone during an arrest – deceased - 1997

Eugene I. Tuggey, well respected, tenacious investigator and later RA at Burbank, CA – deceased - 1982

Bank Robbery SAs were also assigned fugitive matters as needs and availability dictated

Civil Rights Matters:

Richard B. George, later RA at Long Beach, CA, and recipient of Society's Humanitarian Award for the Western Region for his work with crack-addicted newborn children – deceased - 2003

Harry Griffin, meticulous investigator, always well prepared, exceptionally discreet – in nursing home

Kidnap and Extortion matters, which were very low volume classifications, were assigned to all squad members as needs and availability dictated

The Nation of Islam Civil Rights investigation was assigned to SA Harry Griffin. Due to the short deadline set on these cases, seven or fourteen days, and the numerous participants and others to be interviewed, all squad members were involved. Two person teams were given names of police officers and other witnesses to be contacted. SAs Arnold and Crowe interviewed officers Kensic and Tomlinson whose contact with the two individuals at the open trunk precipitated the incident, and Sgt Stanley Uno, the senior LAPD representative on the scene during the first fifteen minutes of the confrontation. SA Griffith interviewed senior LAPD officials.

After obtaining details of the incident from the LAPD perspective, an attempt was made to contact Nation of Islam members but none would respond to requests for interview. The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division requested that each NOI member involved be contacted and a formal declination to be interviewed be obtained. An agreement was reached with the attorney representing the NOI members whereby each member would appear at the NOI mosque, 5606 S. Broadway, and provide his name and decline to be interviewed.

The meeting was scheduled for 1:00pm. The interviewing agents were SAs Harry Griffith and Edward Plevack. After observing the building, supervisor Jacobsen directed the interviewing agents to sit at a table in front of a large window facing South Broadway, in plain view from the street. He set up teams of two agents in cars with a shotgun and directed the vehicles be parked on the street in strategic locations with a view of the window. The LAPD was advised of these plans. At the appointed hour, the agents in the cars watched as the NOI members, individually and in groups of two or three, all dressed in dark suit, white shirt, and tie, slowly made their way along South Broadway and enter the building. One by one they sat down at the table, and in the presence of their attorney gave their names and declined to make any statement. The entire process lasted one hour, and involved about 20 NOI members. When SAs Griffith and Plevack exited the building and entered their vehicle, the surveilling teams departed the area.

A lengthy report of the investigation, authored by SA Griffin, was duly submitted to FBIHQ and nothing further was requested. The local grand jury made no public report of its proceedings.

'MUSLIMS' RIOT

Cultist Killed, Policeman Shot



TRIO ARRESTED—Three suspects are taken into custody by officer after riot between "Muslims" and police at 5606 S. Broadway. Officer handcuffs two black-garbed cultists. Nineteen were arrested.

Four Wounded, 26 Taken Into Custody; Two Officers Beaten

One policeman was shot and two savagely beaten in a blazing gunfight during a riot at the anti-white Muslim headquarters early today.

One black-suited Muslim cultist was slain and six others killed by police bullets before 75 officers quelled the riot at 5606 S. Broadway. Officer Frank Tomlinson was shot through the left elbow; Officer Richard T. Anderson was hit over the head with a five gallon water jug, and Officer Stanley V. Kensic was kicked in the head. Anderson and Kensic suffered possible skull fractures.

Brawl Breaks Out

Police said the brawl erupted minutes after Tomlinson and Kensic stopped to inspect a car at 57th St. and Broadway with a load of clothes in the trunk.

Two men in the car started fighting the officers, said Tomlinson, and then a number of men ran from the

Muslim headquarters nearby. Tomlinson and Kensic were knocked down. Someone grabbed Kensic's revolver and shot Tomlinson.

Officers Anderson and D. L. Weese pulled up in front of the temple and tried to stop a man they saw run from the fight into the temple.

Shooting Starts

They were overpowered, police said, and Anderson was slugged with the heavy water bottle. Weese fired several shots at the attackers.

Other officers arriving had to swap shots with a man armed with a rifle who ran out of the temple firing.

Police cars from University, Newton, 77th divisions, and the robbery and metro details roared to the riot.

The first two cultists shot down were dragged by their Muslim brothers to a second-story room. The others were lying on the sidewalk when ambulances arrived.

Dead an Arrival

Dead on arrival at Central Receiving Hospital was Robert T. Stokes, 29, of 5634 1/2 S. Broadway.

Shot were Robert Rogers, 5634 1/2 S. Broadway; his brother, William; Arthur Coleman Jr., 2626 1/2 S. Metter St.; Roosevelt Walker, 2019 W. 88th St.; Clarence Jenkins, 5102 S. Woodlawn Ave. and Monroe Jones, address not determined.

Four were reported in critical condition early today. Officer R. E. Reynolds also was hospitalized for a broken right thumb and four other officers were treated for contusions.

2,500 Cultists Here

A crowd of nearly 200 persons had gathered when police finally restored order. Most, however, were not cult members but spectators.

Police rounded up 26 persons at the scene. 15 of them in the Muslim "uniform."

All were taken to University Police Station for questioning.

The super-secret Muslim Please Turn to Pg. 2, Col. 3



WOUNDED IN GUNFIGHT—Three suspected members of the "Muslim" cult lie wounded on street in front of Muhammad's Mosque at 5606 S. Broadway, headquarters of the organization.

after gunfight with police. Plainclothesman helps ambulance attendant put wounded man on stretcher. Sgt. Stanley Uno, right, stands by with not gun. One "Muslim" was killed, six wounded.

Times photo by Cliff Gray



SHOT IN ARM— Officer Frank Tomlinson grimaces with pain as he is treated for gunshot wound in the arm at Central Receiving Hospital. A fellow officer was brutally beaten in a street battle with members of the "Muslim" cult.

Times photo

'Muslims' Shoot, Beat Police in Wild Gunfight

Continued from First Page
organization is an anti-white, anti-integration, anti-Christian cult which preaches, "Without struggle, there is no progress."

The Muslims flourish behind the leadership of a self-proclaimed "Muhammad," as a quasi-religious sect. Its members usually wear black shoes and suits, and red or black ties.

The temple, Muhammad's Mosque No. 27, is the Los Angeles headquarters for the hate group. The Muslims publish a newspaper, Muhammad Speaks, which tells of the evil of white man and how he subjects Negroes to slavery.

Police have estimated there are 3,500 Muslims in Southern California. The group has been denounced by officials of the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People and Negro groups which advocate peaceful integration.

Members of the group have been blamed for disturbances in Folsom prison and several penitentiaries in Texas.

The Muslim leader denies his group practices unusual

force to put across its teachings.

"They are only trained in the art of self-defense," Elijah Muhammad told reporters at a press conference during his last visit here a year ago.

MUSLIMS INQUIRY BY JURY SOUGHT

The grand jury will be asked today to investigate the anti-white Muslim Brotherhood that figured in a riot early Saturday in which one man was killed and six others seriously injured.

J. Manley Bowler, chief deputy for the Dist. Atty. McKesson, said the criminal complaints committee of the jury will be asked to make a full investigation because the riot was of great public concern.

Meanwhile, a member of the cult who was released from city jail by mistake

Sunday night turned himself in to the Avalon Memorial Hospital Monday morning.

Fred Jingles Jr., 23, of 939 Washington Pl., Long Beach, who had been booked on suspicion of murder, was returned to jail and held without bail in connection with the death of Robert Stokes, 29, of 5634½ S Broadway.

Stokes was shot to death during the riot.

Jingles was released from jail instead of his brother, Clarence, who posted \$1,005 bail on a charge of suspicion to assault with intent to commit murder.

Pedestrian Hit Twice in Traffic Identified

Police identified through fingerprints Monday a man who was struck and killed at Soto St. and Washington Blvd.

Sgt. J. D. Moran said the victim was Francisco Bobadilla, 30, a bank employee, of 2511¼ E 4th St. He was struck at 1:33 a.m. Monday.

At first believed to have been a hit-run victim, Sgt. Moran said he had located the driver of a semi-truck and trailer which struck Bobadilla. The officer reported the truck driver said he was unaware of striking anyone.

A second motorist also struck Bobadilla, whose body was hurled into the path of the car, Sgt. Moran reported. Neither driver was held.

One man was fatally injured and two others seriously hurt Monday noon in a two-car collision at Washington Blvd. and Bluff Rd. Montebello.

Joseph R. Murray, 65, of 3783 Brookline Ave., Rosemead, died at Beverly Community Hospital, Montebello.

His passengers, Harold James, 49, of 9211 E Marshall St., Rosemead, and Thomas Howlett, 56, of 4622 Pine

St., Pico Rivera, were taken to the same hospital with head and internal injuries.

Wilburn Ray Butler, 23, of 408 Erwin St., Woodland Hills, the other driver, received minor injuries.

Butler was charged with manslaughter.

Ambulance Crew Saves Man in Fire

Two ambulance attendants pulled a driver from a burning automobile on the Harbor Freeway Monday night after his car crashed into a guard rail at Exposition Blvd.

The victim, John Johnson, 36, of 1742 E 42nd St., was taken to General Hospital in critical condition.

Police said Daniel Burk and Mickey Seagle, employees of Aero Pacific Ambulance Service, braved flame from spilled gasoline to get the driver out of the wrecked car, then took him to a hospital.

Muslims Stand Silent at Riot Arraignment

Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); May 3, 1962; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times (1881 - 1985)
pg. 27

Muslims Stand Silent at Riot Arraignment

Nine in Court After Fatal Police Battle; Seven Other Accused Men in Hospital

Nine tense but silent Muslims were arraigned Wednesday in a crowded Municipal Court on charges resulting from a riot between police officers and members of the fanatical anti-white sect.

In the riot early Saturday outside the Muslim temple at 5606 S Broadway, one Muslim was shot to death and seven others were wounded. One policeman was shot and other officers were knocked to the ground and kicked and beaten.

Still awaiting arraignment are the seven wounded Muslims, who are at General Hospital. All of them and a 17-year-old are charged with assault with intent to commit great bodily harm.

Those arraigned Wednesday were permitted to remain free on bail of \$10,500 each pending their preliminary hearing May 24.

Meanwhile, there were these other developments:

1 — Evidence was being prepared for consideration of the grand jury on May 15, when it begins its investigation of the cult and its lead-

er, Elijah Muhammad, of Chicago.

2 — National leaders of the sect, including its No. 2 man, Malcolm X of New York, were arriving here for funeral services Saturday of their dead brother, Ronald T. Stokes, 29.

3 — San Diego police, investigating a report that nearly 200 Muslims had crossed the border into Tijuana Monday night, said their appearance there might have been for the funeral of a prominent Negro.

Mayor Yorty called on leaders of the Negro Community to educate their people to the dangers of the Black Muslim movement.

"I would like to have the Muslims dealt with through the many fine leaders of our Negro community," said Yorty.

The mayor described the Muslims as "an extremely dangerous group."

Funeral services for Stokes, who was shot dead in the riot, will be conducted at 10:30 a.m. Saturday in the People's Funeral Home, 4250 S Central Ave.

New Muslim Outbreaks Possible, Parker Warns

Chief Testifies at Grand Jury Committee Hearing; Full-Scale Inquiry Recommended

Full-scale clashes could break out at any moment between the white-hating Muslim sect and police or any other segment of the community, Police Chief Parker warned Tuesday.

"This is real dynamite," Parker said after giving testimony to the criminal complaints committee of the grand jury about the gunfight Friday night in which one Muslim was slain and six wounded.

A policeman was shot in the elbow and two others were severely beaten.

Full Inquiry

After hearing five witnesses for an hour and 15 minutes, the committee recommended that the jury conduct a full investigation into the riot.

Parker said he hopes the jury would look not only into the circumstances surrounding the gun battle but would also investigate "this hate organization which is dedicated to the destruction of the Caucasian race."

The riot started, police said, when two officers halted a car with a load of clothes in the trunk. Two

men in the car lunged at the officers and others ran out of the Muslim headquarters at 5606 S Broadway to join the fray, investigators reported.

The riot mushroomed until it took 75 officers to restore peace.

'Most Brutal'

"It was the most brutal conflict I've seen since I've been in Los Angeles," Parker said.

The chief emphasized that the battle "hasn't affected the relationship between police and Negroes, because the police realize only a small section of the Negro population is involved."

The majority of the Negro community by far opposes the Muslims, he said.

Some Negro bystanders joined to help police quell the riot, Parker said.

"The Muslims have a trained muscle squad of strong young men called the FOI — Fruits of Islam," Parker told newsmen. "I feel this sect should be exposed like any threat to the community."

"People should realize this is a racial situation which

can be alleviated only by proper exposure, such as any other problem."

Parker carried a heavy briefcase of information on the cultists into the committee room. He said he had been doing extensive research into their theories and activities.

"Their teachings are of the nature that such clashes as occurred the other night are bound to re-occur and will become more frequent," Parker said.

Officers Testify

Others testifying were Dep. Dist. Atty. Fred Henderson, Chief of Detectives Thad Brown and two unidentified officers who investigated the week-end riot.

Parker estimated the Muslims' active following here at from 2,000 to 3,000.

Grand Jury foreman Verne Orr said the panel will begin hearings May 15.

Meantime, 16 persons arrested in connection with the riot are due to appear before Municipal Judge Joseph G. Gorman today for arraignment on charges of assault with intent to commit great bodily harm.

A 17th has similar charges pending against him in juvenile court.

Muslim Leader Accuses Police of Murder

Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); May 5, 1962; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times (1881 - 1985)

pg. 1

Muslim Leader Accuses Police of Murder

Malcolm X, New York leader of the Black Muslim sect, Friday accused police of shooting down "seven innocent unarmed black men" in cold blood in a melee near Muslim headquarters the night of April 27.

In an emotion-laden press conference at the Statler Hilton, the Muslim minister termed the death of Ronald Stokes, 29, of 5634½ S Broadway, as "murder by police bullets."

Six other wounded Negroes were kicked, beaten and left to lie handcuffed in the street without medical attention, Mr. X charged.

The minister read a tele-

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MUSLIM

Continued from First Page
County Committee in Human Relations.

Mr. X accused Police Chief Parker of "misusing the American press to spread false propaganda in order to camouflage the true facts" of the shooting affray, in which 75 policemen were involved.

Cover-up Charged

The "atrocious" and efforts to "cover it up" had the "sanction and support of the American press," Mr. X said.

The incident began, he said, when two policemen stopped two Muslims "who worked for a dry cleaner" to investigate them on suspicion of burglary because of clothes in the car.

The suspects angered the officers by their submissiveness, so one officer twisted a suspect's arm, Mr. X said.

"At that time," he went on, "a Negro special policeman fired some shots that caused an alarm. And instead of coming to the incident, the police came to the mosque a block away and drove up shooting."

Parker in Chicago

Chief Parker was invited to the press conference, but was in Chicago attending a law conference at Northwestern University.

Mr. X did not relate incidents after the asserted arm-twisting until police reinforcements moved in. A spokesman for the police department, queried later, said:

"Shortly after the first two officers began interrogating the two men, they were jumped upon by a large group of them (Muslims). One of the Muslims got the officer's gun and fired three shots.

"One of these shots struck Officer Frank Tomlinson, shattering his arm."

Violence Denied

The Muslim spokesmen said false accusations had been made that the organization is a white-hating, violence-prone group. Members are not permitted to carry arms, he said, and are instructed never to fight except in self-defense.

Wounded were held in police custody 48 hours without hospitalization, he said.

"Parker has been filling his own men with hatred of the black community," he charged. "He is intoxicated with power."

Mr. X held up photographs, one of which showed, he said, that Stokes was clubbed in the head after he was shot.

Leaders Invited

"The police went wild—went mad—that night," he said.

The minister said he had invited Negro community leaders to the press conference "so they could go home and read it and see what you print."

Seventeen persons, including the wounded, have been charged with assault with intent to do great bodily harm as a result of the melee, and the case has been submitted to the county grand jury for hearing May 15.

"It will be adjudicated in the courts of this county as it



LEADER—Malcolm X, a Muslim leader, accuses police of murder in the death of member April 27.

Times photo

should be," the police department spokesman said.

Funeral services for Stokes will be conducted at 10:30 a.m. today at the People's Funeral Home, 4250 S. Central Ave., with Mr. X expected to attend. Interment will be in Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, 160th St. and Central Ave.