



U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

RM:PP:CG
144-19-2765

Criminal Section - PHB
930 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

MAY 27 2011

[REDACTED]
Villa Rica, GA 30180

Dear [REDACTED]:

We are writing to inform you that the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) recently conducted a review of the circumstances surrounding the death of your [REDACTED] Arthur James Hill, on August 20, 1965. We regret to inform you that we are unable to proceed further with a federal criminal investigation of this matter because the person responsible for Mr. Hill's death, Buster Lee Green, is deceased. Please accept our sincere condolences on the loss of your brother-in-law.

Over the last 50 years, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice has been instrumental in bringing justice to some of the nation's most disturbing civil rights era crimes. Today, the Division continues to use its resources and expertise to identify, locate, and, where possible, prosecute those responsible for committing racially-motivated crimes committed more than 40 years ago.

In 2006, the FBI began its "Cold Case Initiative" -- a comprehensive effort to identify and investigate racially-motivated murders committed decades ago. Toward that end, each of the 56 FBI field offices searched their "cold case files" to identify incidents which might be ripe for investigation. In February of 2007, the FBI announced the next phase of the Initiative, which includes a partnership with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), and the National Urban League to assist the FBI in identifying additional cases for investigation and to solicit their help. In October 2008, the "Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act" ("Emmett Till Act") became law giving the Department of Justice additional tools to investigate "violations of criminal civil rights statutes . . . result[ing] in death" that "occurred not later than December 31, 1969."

The federal review concerning Mr. Hill's death was begun pursuant to the Cold Case Initiative and the Emmett Till Act. This review was conducted by FBI Special Agents and an experienced "cold case" civil rights prosecutor. We have now concluded that review and wish to inform you in writing of our findings.

cc: Records Chrono

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[REDACTED]

As part of its review of the circumstances of Mr. Hill's death, the FBI interviewed you; researched and reviewed 1965 *Carroll County Georgian* articles; obtained Mr. Green's indictment and verdict form; conducted searches of various "logical databases"; and requested that a Carroll County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) investigator interview [REDACTED] Mr. Green's [REDACTED]

According to our review, Mr. Green shot and killed Mr. Hill and shot and wounded [REDACTED] on August 20, 1965. As you told the FBI, shortly before the shooting, [REDACTED] Mr. Hill, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] stopped at a gas station in Villa Rica. After [REDACTED] pumped gas, he and an unidentified white man began to argue and fight. When a second unidentified white man approached [REDACTED] Mr. Hill intervened. It was then that Mr. Green, an employee of the gas station, approached [REDACTED] firing his pistol. As Mr. Hill was getting back into the car, Mr. Green shot and fatally wounded him, and then shot [REDACTED] then drove a short distance to a hospital, but Mr. Hill was deceased by the time he arrived there.

(b)(7)(G) Mr. Green was indicted on a charge of manslaughter for killing Mr. Hill and on a charge of assault with intent to murder for shooting [REDACTED]. According to an October 14, 1965 article in the *Carroll County Georgian*, Mr. Green was acquitted of all charges. According to the article, two white men, [REDACTED] testified that they were stopped at a red light when a car occupied by five African-American men and women stopped in front of them and someone in the car "called [REDACTED] names." [REDACTED] then followed the other car to a gas station where the two groups began to argue. Mr. Green then told everyone to leave; [REDACTED] left, but [REDACTED] group did not. According to the article, Mr. Green gave an unsworn statement in which he claimed that Mr. Hill refused to leave, and "called him all sorts of names in the presence of women." Mr. Green stated further that Mr. Hill then reached to the floorboard of his car and Mr. Green saw the butt of a weapon. At that point, Mr. Green yelled at Mr. Hill, "don't do that." Mr. Green claimed that Mr. Hill replied, "I'm going to blow your guts out, you SOB," whereupon Mr. Green fired his pistol nine times, killing Mr. Hill and wounding [REDACTED]

Mr. Green died on January 3, 1973.

After careful review of this incident, we have concluded that the now deceased Mr. Green acted alone when he shot and killed Mr. Hill and shot and wounded [REDACTED] and, therefore, we have [REDACTED] (b)(7)(C) no choice but to close our investigation.