



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

RM:PF:SW:mj
144-1-3378

Criminal Division - PHB
910 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

(b)(7)(C)

APR 28 2010

Birmingham, AL 35215

Re: (b)(7)(C)

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 (b)(7)(C) Johnnie Brown Robinson, on September 15, 1963. 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. Robinson's death, Jack Parker, is deceased. Please accept our sincere condolences on the loss of your (b)(7)(C).

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. Robinson'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

(b)(7)(C)

Re: P. 04/08/10

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As part of its review of the circumstances of Mr. Robinson's death, the FBI researched and reviewed media articles from 1963 and 1964; obtained the file of the Birmingham Police Department (BPD), that conducted the local investigation; and conducted searches of Alabama death records.

According to our review, BPD Officer Jack Parker fatally shot Johnnie Robinson on September 13, 1963. At the time of the shooting, Mr. Robinson was among a group of African-American youths who were reportedly throwing stones at a car containing several white youths who were flying Confederate flags. Earlier that day, the 16th Street Baptist Church was bombed, resulting in the death of four African-American girls. The bombing sparked racial rioting and unrest throughout the city. When officers arrived at the scene, Mr. Robinson and his friends began to flee. Officer Parker stated that he fired his shotgun towards the ground, but some of the shots struck Mr. Robinson in the back as he was running away. According to the coroner's investigation, Mr. Robinson died from injuries caused by the shot to the back.

A local grand jury was convened, but did not return an indictment in the case.

In addition to the findings described above, the federal investigation determined that Mr. Parker died on April 9, 1977.

After careful review of this incident, we have concluded that the now deceased Jack Parker acted alone when he shot and killed Mr. Robinson and therefore, we have no choice but to close our investigation.

We regret that we cannot be of further assistance to you. Again, please accept our sincere condolences on the loss of your (b)(7)(C)

Sincerely,

Paige Fitzgerald
Deputy Chief in Charge of the Cold Case Initiative