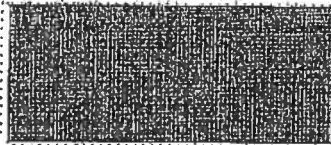




U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division

MIKE PMP:SS Write  
144-2-1431

Criminal Section - FBI  
230 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530



MAR 28 2011

Tuskegee, Alabama 36083

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 relative, Samuel L. Younge, Jr., on January 3, 1966. We regret to inform you that we are unable to proceed further with a federal criminal investigation of this matter because the person who is responsible for Mr. Younge's death, Marvin L. Segrest, is deceased. In addition, the five-year statute of limitations that was in effect at the time of Mr. Younge's death has expired.

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 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 "Bennett Bill Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act" ("Bennett Bill Act") became law giving the Department of Justice additional tools to investigate "violations of criminal civil rights statutes resulting in death that occurred not later than December 31, 1969."

The federal review concerning Mr. Younge's death was begun pursuant to the Cold Case Initiative and the Bennett Bill Act. This review was conducted by FBI Special Agents and an experienced "cold case" civil rights prosecutor. As part of its review of the circumstances of Mr. Younge's death, the FBI researched and reviewed media articles from 1966, obtained the file of the Alabama Department of Public Safety, which conducted the local investigation; interviewed the local coroner and the local prosecutor who indicted Segrest for second-degree murder; and conducted searches of Alabama death records.

According to our review, on January 3, 1966, Marvin L. Segrest, a gas station attendant, fatally shot Mr. Younger beneath the left eye while Mr. Younger was attempting to access the restroom. The local investigation revealed that Mr. Younger got into an altercation with Segrest over whether he could use the indoor restroom. Mr. Younger then retrieved a golf club from his friend's car with the apparent intention of using it as a weapon. Mr. Younger then returned to the area outside the gas station and continued arguing with Segrest, who was armed with a gun. As Mr. Younger ducked behind cars and a bus, Segrest fired a shot at him but missed. Mr. Younger then ran towards an alley, at which time Segrest fired at him again, striking him in the face. Mr. Younger fell to the ground and was pronounced dead at the scene.

In December 1966, Segrest was tried on the charge of murder in the second degree. An all-white Lee County, Alabama jury returned a verdict of "not guilty." A search of death records revealed that Segrest died in 1986, following an illness.

After careful review of this incident, we have concluded that the now-deceased Marvin Segrest acted alone when he pursued and shot Mr. Younger. Additionally, the five-year statute of limitations that was in effect at the time of Mr. Younger's death has expired. Therefore, we have no choice but to close our investigation.

We regret that we cannot be of further assistance to you. Please accept our sincere condolences on the loss of your relative.

Sincerely,

Ridge M. Fitzgerald  
Deputy Chief in Charge of the Cold Case Initiative