

Screened By:  
Mary Kay Schmidt  
Date: 03-28-2013  
FOIA CASE: NW 39061

U. S. Department of Justice

(MATERIAL MUST NOT BE REMOVED FROM OR ADDED TO THIS FILE)

DO NOT DESTROY:  
HISTORICAL VALUE,  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES/  
FEDERAL BUREAU

*of*

INVESTIGATION

Bureau File Number 157-3701

See also Nos.

CLASSIFICATION NO.

157-958

Serials

Volume Number

2

80-1

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C 2-13-73  
Slutts 7-21-72

#1

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-958) (C)

DATE: 2/13/73

FROM : SA NORMAN H. STUTTE

SUBJECT: EARNEST HENRY AVANTS  
EM - KLAN  
OO: JACKSON

Investigation in this matter was begun in order to determine if subject is now presently involved in any klan activities in the Natchez, Miss., area. All investigation in this matter has been conducted and has failed to yield any direct indication that the subject is now directly involved with any klan activities or is a member of a klan unit.

In view of the foregoing information, it is recommended that this matter be considered closed.

NOT STAMPED

2-14-73

(W)

① - Jackson  
NHS/njb  
(1) *nf*



5010-108-01

157-958-159

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 10 1973	
FBI-JACKSON	

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-1519) (P)

DATE: 12/21/72

FROM : SA NORMAN H. STUTTE

FOIA(b)(7) - (D)

SUBJECT: UKA, INC.  
ADAMS COUNTY, MISS.

On 12/15/72, [REDACTED]

and furnished the following voluntary information:

He stated in the interim that the following information was the only information that he had available concerning the status of UKA Unit #2 in Adams County, Mississippi:

(18) - Jackson (2-157-1519)  
(1-157-958) (ERNEST HENRY AVANTS)  
(1-157-2444) (RALEIGH JACKSON GLOVER)  
(1-157-2801) (DONALD HOUSTON WILKINSON)  
(1-157-5151) (JEWEL LEE BURT)  
(1-157-5940) (W. L. ROBERTSON)  
(1-157-7569) (JAMES JACKSON)  
(1-157-7601) (MELVIN LAVERN HARDY)  
(1-157-14804) (CHARLES BRUCE MOAK)  
(1-157-14805) (AMOS EUGENE KINNEY)  
(1-157-15766) (CHARLES NATIONS)  
(1-157-15891) (CECIL BAILEY)  
(1-157-15892) (H. E. VINES)  
(1-157-15893) (EUGENE L. THOMAS)  
(1-157-15894) (BOBBY BRUCE BOYD)  
(1-157-15895) (JAMES LIPSCOMB)  
(1-157-15896) (GORDON MONROE HUGHES, JR.)

NHS:kms

(18)



5010-108-01

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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DEC 21 1972	
FBI-JACKSON	

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

JN 157-1519

He advised at the present time DONALD WILKINSON is still the EC and that W. L. ROBERTSON is the secretary-treasurer. He stated that there are actually only about six active members. Those members being the two mentioned above, plus JEWEL LEE BURT, and JEWEL LEE BURT's son-in-law, AMOS EUGENE KINNEY. He stated that he has no information whatsoever indicating that CHARLES MOAK, MELVIN HARDY, CECIL BAILEY, H. E. VINES, BOBBY BOYD, JAMES LIPSCOMB, or GORDON HUGHES are paying their dues or even interested in further contact by UKA people in Adams County, Miss. He stated it has come to his attention that EUGENE L. THOMAS who resides near Stanton or Cannonsburg, Mississippi, is probably trying to obtain the EC's job and that he has no definite indication that this is going to occur. He further advised that a person who attended at one time several meetings and was taken into the UKA Unit #2 was CHARLES BRUCE MOAK but stated that since MOAK won a shotgun approximately one year ago he has not attended any meetings although upon occasion he did pay his dues.

He advised that JAMES JACKSON is not a member of UKA Unit #2 although he might possibly be a member of the Third Unit in Natchez, Mississippi. He stated, however, his contact with other klansmen indicate that UKA Unit #3 has now become defunct as well as UKA Unit #1 which is old Unit 800.

He indicated that he has no information whatsoever concerning the possible membership of CHARLES NATIONS in any klan unit. He stated that NATIONS resides on W. FIELDS' property on the Morgantown Road near Washington, Mississippi, and he believes him to be a roughneck in the oil fields. He stated, however, that he is not sure this is the right man.

He advised that it is his information that ERNEST HENRY AVANTS is allegedly separated from his wife, GLADYS.



JN 157-1519

He stated that she is running a small cafe located in the Natchez, Mississippi, area and that AVANTS himself is working somewhere off-shore with some oil company. He stated that he has no information indicating that AVANTS is a member of any klan unit at this time.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-1519)

DATE: 10/19/72

FROM : SA NORMAN H. STUTTE

SUBJECT: UKA, INC.  
ADAMS COUNTY, MISS.  
EM - KLAN  
OO: JACKSON

On 10/17/72, EDWARD MADISON HUDSON, 24 Fourth Street, Natchez, Miss., who is a former member of the UKA in Natchez, Miss., furnished the following voluntary information:

HUDSON advised the following individuals are unknown to him, and he has no information indicating they might or might not be a member of any Klan Unit in the Natchez, Miss., area:

CHARLES BRUCE MOAK  
CECIL M. BAILEY  
H. E. VINES

- 2 - 157-1519
- 2 - 157-958 (ERNEST HENRY AVANTS)
- 2 - 157-2444 (RALEIGH JACKSON GLOVER)
- 2 - 157-2801 (DONALD HOUSTON WILKINSON)
- 2 - 157-5151 (JEWEL LEE BURT)
- 2 - 157-5940 (WILLIAM LINUS ROBERTS)
- 2 - 157-7569 (JAMES JACKSON)
- 2 - 157-7601 (MELVIN LAVERN HARDY)
- 2 - 157-14804 (CHARLES BRUCE MOAK)
- 2 - 157-14805 (AMOS EUGENE KINNEY)
- 2 - 157-15766 (CHARLES NATIONS)
- 2 - 157-15891 (CECIL M. BAILEY)
- 2 - 157-15892 (H. E. VINES)
- 2 - 157-15893 (EUGENE THOMAS)
- 2 - [REDACTED]
- 2 - 157-15895 (JAMES LIPSCOMB)
- 2 - 157-15896 (GORDON MONROE HUGHES, JR.)

NHS/wgj  
(34)

FOIA(b) (6)  
FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

157-958-157

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED

Stutte



5010-108-01

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

JAMES LIPSCOMB  
GORDON MONROE HUGHES, JR.

HUDSON advised that ERNEST AVANTS to his knowledge is presently working off-shore with some drilling operation off the coast of Louisiana. He stated AVANTS' wife, whose name he believes to be SARAH, is operating a cafe in the Trace Down Shopping Center in Natchez, Miss.

HUDSON advised he has recently obtained information that would indicate that RALEIGH JACKSON GLOVER is moving into the residence of DONALD WILKINSON after WILKINSON became involved with a ten or eleven-year-old girl and was charged with Statutory Rape. He stated he has no idea at the present time where WILKINSON can be located and stated it was only hearsay that GLOVER had moved into WILKINSON's house. Further, HUDSON advised that he had been talking to CHICKEN FOOT ROBINSON concerning WILKINSON and his problem, and stated that a good many of the Klan in the Natchez, Miss., area are divided on case of WILKINSON, approximately fifty percent being for him, stating he could not have done this, and approximately fifty percent being one hundred percent against him.

HUDSON stated he had overheard recently from JAMES JACKSON that JEWEL LEE BURT and his son-in-law, AMOS EUGENE KINNEY have become rather disenchanted with the UKA Unit #2 after WILKINSON was involved with the young girl and was indicted. He stated another person at the table at Bob's Eats located on Highway 61 North in Natchez, Miss., was later identified to him as EMMETT L. HARDY, said something to the effect the unit should be disbanded and forgotten about inasmuch as nobody seems to be interested. He stated it is his believe that BURT is residing with one of his daughters, whose husband was killed in some sort of industrial accident and that AMOS KINNEY, his son-in-law is also residing at the same location.

JN 157-1519

HUDSON advised the name CHARLES NATIONS seems vaguely familiar to him and this particular individual is a roughneck who works in the oil fields in and around Natchez, Miss. He stated he has never obtained any information indicating that NATIONS is a member of the Klan but stated he does believe he lives out towards TULLY SEALE's residence, near the end of Morgantown Road in Washington, Miss.

HUDSON advised the name EUGENE THOMAS is the name that was given to him as being a man who is allegedly pushing for the EC of Unit #2 of which DONALD WILKINSON has been suspended. He stated he obtained this information and that he does not know how accurate it might be. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and he will attempt to obtain further information on [REDACTED] and EUGENE THOMAS.

LEADS:

FOIA(b) (6)  
FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

JACKSON

AT NATCHEZ (ADAMS COUNTY), MISS.

Will follow and develop background on UKA Unit #2 new members in the Natchez area.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-958) (P)

DATE: 8/22/72

FROM : SA NORMAN H. STUTTE

SUBJECT: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS  
EM - KLAN  
OO: JN

Re memo of SAs FRANK B. WATTS and JOHN B. RUCKER, JR., dated 7/21/72.

The following investigation was conducted at Natchez, Miss., by SA NORMAN H. STUTTE:

LEROY WATTS, Records, Adams County SO, Natchez, Miss., advised that under Adams Co. SO arrest records he located an arrest record for ERNEST HENRY AVANTS as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Charge</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
12/13/68	Public drunk	Charges dropped
3/3/69	Disturbing the peace	Charges dropped
9/9/70	Public drunk	No disposition shown
12/9/71	Driving while intoxicated	No disposition shown
6/19/72	Disturbing the peace, public drunk	No disposition shown

Further AVANTS is shown to be a white male American born 1/23/31 in Lincoln Co., Miss., 71" tall, 195 pounds, blond hair, blue eyes, ruddy complexion,



5010-108-01

2 - Jackson

NHS:cbw

(2) cbw

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

157-958-156

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AUG 22 1972	
FBI - JACKSON	

JN 157-958

employed with Williams Offshore Drilling, New Orleans, Louisiana.

On 7/27/72 Lieutenant GLENN S. ARNOLD, Natchez, Miss., PD advised that he could locate no arrest record on ERNEST HENRY AVANTS.

On 8/17/72 ELLA F. ATKINS, Manager, Natchez, Miss., Credit Bureau, 106 South Wall, Natchez, advised that her files reflect that ERNEST HENRY AVANTS does not have a current address in her files. She further advised that according to her file, AVANTS is employed with the Williams Offshore Drilling Co. out of New Orleans, La., and his wife, GLADYS, is employed at the Trace Town Cafe at Trace Town Shopping Center, Natchez.

LEADS:

JACKSON

AT NATCHEZ (ADAMS CO.), MISS.

Follow and report attempts to determine if subject is involved in current Klan activities.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157- 958) (P)

DATE: 7/28/72

FROM : SA FRANK B. WATTS

SUBJECT: *Emmett Till*  
EM (KLAN)

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

On 7/13/72, [REDACTED], a highly sensitive source, furnished certain original klan records which were in possession of W. S. TORRANCE (klan leader), Jackson, Miss.

The attached was part of these records furnished by this informant.

Original of the attached is located in [REDACTED].

1 - 157-  
FBW/clm (1)



5010-108-01

157-958-155

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 1 1972	
FBI - JACKSON	

*Shu the M*

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

Official 1

Oct. '71

Jan.- Apr. '72

May - Jul. '72

Sam B. - IN ACT

L.T.M. - 845-3820

~~Danver H. - 353-5256~~

W.S.To. - 353-5256

Archie W. - 482-1739

Ed F. - 483-1356

Bobby E. - 353-5256

~~Austin H. - 353-5256~~

H.C. Esp. - 483-5352

D. Pond. - 328-6163

Ernest A. - 445-8093

Sang S. - 626-8494

L.M.G. - 683-2631

Buck B. - 776-6315

Norman S. - 656-4307

Jimmy Y. - 854-8632

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157- 958)

DATE: 7/21/72

FROM : SA FRANK B. WATTS  
SA JOHN B. RUCKER, JR.

SUBJECT: ERNEST AVANT  
EM - KLAN

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

On 7/13/72, [REDACTED], an anonymous source, furnished certain original Klan records, publications, and other miscellaneous Klan literature. This material reflected activity of various Klan groups such as the WKKKKOM, UKA, Inc., National States Rights Party, and National Socialist White Peoples Party, as well as miscellaneous type organizations such as the John Birch Society, and National White Citizens Council.

Among this voluminous material was found original dues records, Klan membership applications, as well as a list of secret members of combined Klan groups made up of trusted leaders and most proven Klansmen.

Subject's name appeared among this material.

Details of all information furnished by this highly sensitive source is located in [REDACTED].

The original record which reflects information in regard to captioned individual is being directed to this file.

In view of the above, subject's case is being reopened. Appropriate record checks should be made to further identify subject, develop background, as well as contact with current informants for any indication of current activity and/or violence potential.

FBW:bbh  
(2)



5010-108-01

*Reopen &  
assign  
STUTTE*

157-958-154

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUL 21 1972	
FBI-JACKSON	

*STUTTE*

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

JN 157

Due to the extreme sensitivity of the original source in this matter, no interview should be conducted unless current substantiating information is obtained from independent sources.

Date prepared

June 24, 1970

Date received

6/2, 22/70

Received from (name or symbol number)

[REDACTED]

Received by

SA ROBERT EDWARD LEE

Method of delivery (check appropriate blocks)

☒ in person

☒ by telephone

☐ by mail

☒ orally

☐ recording device

☐ written by Informant

If orally furnished and reduced to writing by Agent:  
Date

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Date of Report

June 24, 1970

Dictated

to

Transcribed

Authenticated  
by Informant

Date(s) of activity

Brief description of activity or material

Information regarding various individuals  
who were at one time associated with the  
WKKKKOM, Jones County, Miss. and who hang around  
Nick's #1, Laurel, Miss.

File where original is located if not attached

[REDACTED]

\* INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED BY AN ASTERISK (\*) ONLY ATTENDED A MEETING AND DID NOT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE.  
VIOLENCE OR REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES WERE NOT DISCUSSED.

☐ Information recorded on a card index by \_\_\_\_\_ on date \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks:

[REDACTED]  
157-446  
157-3484

WKKKKOM, Jones County, Miss.  
DEAVOURS NIX

[REDACTED]  
157-8951  
157-958

GEORGE POORE, JR  
ERNEST AVANTS

FOIA(b) (6)  
FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

REL/

Block Stamp

157-958-153

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 25 1970	
FBI - JACKSON	

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] DEAVOURS NIX

June 22, 1970

On 6/2/70, source advised that [REDACTED] was observed at Nick's #1, operated by DEAVOURS NIX, former State investigator of the WKKKKOM. [REDACTED] was with a woman other than his wife and both were drinking. A short time after [REDACTED] and the woman left [REDACTED] wife came in looking for him. She was rather upset that he had not been home and the fact that he was reported to have been with another person. She stated she was not going to put up with this situation.

On 6/22/70, source advised that [REDACTED] wife was in Nick's #1, about three times last week looking for [REDACTED]. She claimed that he had not been home for several days. It was learned that nearly everytime [REDACTED] comes to Nick's #1, he takes "scraps" for his dog. He is still living near [REDACTED].

It was learned that [REDACTED] and is working [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was in Nick's #1 very drunk last week and some there, believed to have been one of the waitresses asked [REDACTED] what was wrong with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] stated he was drunk and was not celebrating any victory.

It was also learned that [REDACTED] and NIX were very much in favor of JAMES HESTER for Circuit Judge, Jones County over Judge LUNSFORD CASEY. It was not known just what the reason was for this support. It was believed that CASEY had been going along with the area of Nick's #1 but must have crossed them in some way.

GEORGE POORE, JR.

On 6/2, 22/70, source advised that GEORGE POORE, JR., is still living in a room over Nick's #1. He is employed by Chelsey Pruitt Drilling Company, near Waynesboro, Miss.

ERNEST AVANTS [REDACTED]

On 6/22/70, source learned that the wife of [REDACTED] was calling long distance for [REDACTED] but did not locate him since no one at Nick's #1, would give her his home telephone number.

EDDIE SULLIVAN, JR.

TRAVIS BUCKLEY

On 6/22/70, source advised that HOMER SULLIVAN, SR., father of EDDIE SULLIVAN, JR., was observed talking with TRAVIS BUCKLEY, Attorney, for EDDIE, about the trial of SULLIVAN that is coming up in Jasper County, Miss. charged with possession of burglary tools.

FOIA(b) (6)  
FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

[REDACTED] On 6/2/70, source advised that [REDACTED] was observed at Nick's #1, recently. He was drinking too excess and was trying to start trouble with a customer, however, some one stopped him and he quited down. Source believes that [REDACTED] was on some type of narcotics.

DEAVOURS NIX

On 6/22/70, source advised that DEAVOURS NIX, was observed at Nick's #1, last week. He came into the building around 11:30 pm walked to the rear of the building where he sat on a box. It appeared that he might slide into the box but he never did. He sat there from the time of arrival until approximately 1:00 am. He was smiling at everyone and laughed at some of the remarks by the customers. It was reported that this was something unusual ~~for~~ for NIX ~~since~~ since he is usually very gruff and argumentive.

Date prepared

March 31, 1970

Date received

3/6, 10, 23/70

Received from (name or symbol number)

[REDACTED]

Received by

SA ROBERT EDWARD LEE  
SA BERNARD C. LANG

Method of delivery (check appropriate blocks)

☒ in person

☒ by telephone

☐ by mail

☒ orally

☐ recording device

☐ written by Informant

If orally furnished and reduced to writing by Agent:  
Date

Dictated \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Transcribed \_\_\_\_\_

Authenticated  
by Informant \_\_\_\_\_

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Date of Report

3/31/70

Date(s) of activity

2/13/70 -- 3/23/70

Brief description of activity or material

Information concerning various individuals  
that frequent Nick's Restaurant #1, operated  
by DEAVOURS NIX, former State Investigator  
for the WKKKKOM.

File where original is located if not attached

[REDACTED]

\* INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED BY AN ASTERISK (\*) ONLY ATTENDED A MEETING AND DID NOT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE.  
VIOLENCE OR REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES WERE NOT DISCUSSED.

☐ Information recorded on a card index by \_\_\_\_\_ on date \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks:

Source advised that he was sick for the last three weeks in February,  
1970 with the flue.

157-18

SAM BOWERS

157-63

WKKKKOM, State, Miss.

157-433

HENRY DEBOXTTEL

157-3484

DEAVOURS NIX

157-3643

ELMER HENDRY

157-4054

ANDRA HENDRY

157-5409

TRAVIS BUCKLEY

157-5733

BILLY RAY HANKINS

157-6654

CARL FORD

157-8951

GEORGE POORE, JR.

157-9542

SONNEY COOLEY

157-

ERNEST AVANTS ✓

REL/

Block Stamp

157-958-152

SEARCHED <i>mk</i>	INDEXED <i>mk</i>
SERIALIZED <i>mk</i>	FILED <i>mk</i>
APR 3 - 1970	
FBI - JACKSON	

March 31, 1970

SAM BOWERS:

On 3/6/70, source advised that SAM BOWERS, former Imperial Wizard, WKKKKOM, advised that he was expecting to be picked up at any time by the Federal Marshals. Source does not think that BOWERS is going to file any further legal action.

DEAVOURS NIX: TRAVIS BUCKLEY and CARL FORD

On 3/6/70, Source advised that DEAVOURS NIX and his attorneys ARE GETTING THEIR CASE READY TO GO TO TRIAL later this month. NIX is suing the Southern Railroad for damages to Nick's Restaurant #1, caused by the explosion of the tank cars during early 1969. Source thinks that they are trying to pull some "funny stuff" in their trial.

DEAVOURS NIX    SYBIL NIX    ERNEST AVANTS

FOIA(b) (6)

FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

On 3/10/70, Source advised that ERNEST AVANTS of Natchez, Miss. was in Laurel three or four days before the contact. He was staying at Nick's Restaurant #1, (formerly the John's Restaurant), owned by DEAVOURS NIX, former State Investigator of the WKKKKOM. Source does not know just what AVANTS was doing in Laurel since he was out at night and slept during the early morning. He did not work to source's knowledge.

It was also learned that three of the waitresses got into an argument over the boy friend of [redacted]. [redacted] has been dating a boy by the name of [redacted] who is reported to be married. The other two waitresses told [redacted] about the marriage and she got real upset and claimed that these girls were trying to break up the affair between [redacted] and [redacted]. Mrs. SYBIL NIX fired the two waitresses because they "stuck their nose" into the affair of [redacted].

On 2/23/70, Source advised that the two waitresses who were fired had returned to the job when Mrs. NIX realized what had actually happened.

On 3/10/70

/Source also reported that about one week ago that someone reportedly called the cafe and threatened NIX, His wife and family. NIX became real upset and called the police. Later some man came in a NIX again called the PD. They searched the man and his car but did not find any gun. The man was not arrested and is supposed to have left right after this.

HENRY DEBOXTEL

On 3/10/70, Source advised that information has been received that HENRY DEBOXTEL was at Nick's Restaurant #1 (formerly John's Restaurant) on 3/2/70 when a negro male came in and ordered a sandwich. This was delivered. After the negro left DEBOXTEL asked the waitress what

did that "C6on" want. He was told that he only ordered a sandwich, DEBOXTTEL did not make any further comment. He was drinking rather heavy at the time and to source's knowledge has not mentioned the incident any more.

SONNY COOLEY

On 3/23/70, Source heard that SONNY COOLEY had bought a 45 cal pistol from DEAVOURS NIX. This pistol was reportedly owned by SAM BOWERS, who was in jail. Source did not see the sale but heard it through another source. [REDACTED]

GEORGE POORE, JR.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

On 3/23/70, Source advised that GEORGE POORE, JR., is working for some oil drilling company near Waynesboro, Miss. and is living with one PAT BAGGETT at 820 W 5th Street.

SAM BOWERS      DEAVOURS NIX

On 3/23/70, Source advised that when the Federal Marshals arrested SAM BOWERS he was eating lunch at Nick's Restaurant #1, formerly John's Restaurant, operated by DEAVOURS NIX, former State Investigator, WKKKKOM. BOWERS was permitted to finish his meal before leaving.

Source reported that after the Marshals and BOWERS left some of the employees remarked that the Marshals were very nice and did not act like they had been lead to believe.

FOIA(b) (6)

DEAVOURS NIX CARL FORD TRAVIS BUCKLEY

FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

On 3/23/70, Source advised that DEAVOURS NIX, Owner, Nick's Restaurant, TRAVIS BUCKLEY and CARL FORD, Klan Attorneys, have been working in NIX'S office several days preparing for the damage law suit against the Southern Railroad. This suit resulted as damaged caused by the Tank Car Explosion on the Southern Railroad during the early part of 1969.

Source overheard BUCKLEY and NIX discussing how many employees were on duty at the time of the explosion. It was believed that NIX identified [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] as the only employee. It was also discussed if any roomers were in the rooms over the cafe and it was determined that no one was there. Source feels that NIX and BUCKLEY might be going to get some out of town witnesses to say they were staying in one of the rooms at the time of the explosion. Source mentioned that he had heard that [REDACTED] had been approached to say some one was there but she had refused to do so.

Source also learned that Mrs. JOHN McBRIDE, former owner, has made the statement that NIX has never paid her for the building and she thinks they, NIX, hopes to get enough money from the railroad to pay for the building.



(NOTE: On 3/24/70, TRAVIS BUCKLEY, was observed at the Belmont Cafe in Jackson, Miss. accompanied by two W/M who were very rough looking. One was approximately 26, 5'10", 190, Blk hair. The other was approximately 28-30, 6'1, 185, dark hair both were wearing work clothing. The taller of the two was observed with CARL FORD and BUCKLEY on 3/30/70 at the Court House in Laurel, Miss)(SA R.E.LEE and SA L. L. AMANN saw the group in Jackson and LEE saw them in Laurel)

An article in the Laurel Leader Call 3/31/70 indicated the case had been settled out of court prior to trial. No amount of the settlement was mentioned.

On 3/23/70, Source advised that on 3/20/70, FORD and BUCKLEY were observed drinking beer at Nick's Restaurant #1, and after two beers BUCKLEY quit stating that he was not drinking any more since his limit was now two with no whiskey. FORD continued to drink as did his wife, both got rather loud before leaving the restaurant.

ANDRA HENDRY

ELMER HENDRY

On 3/23/70, Source advised that several months ago ELMER HENDRY, father of ANDRA HENDRY, who was tried for murder of a security guard in Laurel, Miss. during the Masonite Corp. strike in 1967, made the remark that he had paid GUY WALKER \$7,000 in addition to what he paid the other lawyers, to represent ANDRA.

BILLY RAY HANKINS

On 3/23/70, Source advised that BILLY RAY HANKINS was observed at Jonh's Cafe, 3/21/70, drinking coffee. Source stated that HANKINS has been observed there on several other occasions but does not seem to have much conversation with NIX or any of the others.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-958)

DATE: 5/22/69

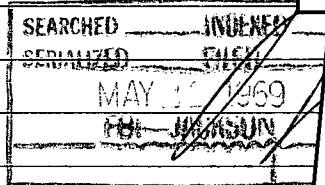
FROM : ~~XX~~ STENO CAROL SMITHSUBJECT: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS  
RM (KLAN)

In connection with the destruction of channelizing memoranda, the information contained on the serials listed below was incorporated in a ☐ report ☒ letterhead memorandum dated 5/13/69. Where the serial is accompanied by the file and serial number of the original informant report, the information was not used because it was of no value to the report. The review for the communication checked above was made from 1 through 150.

In accordance with the above, the following serials are to be destroyed.

Volume	Serials (List by serial or serial scope.)
I	20 orig in
	<del>30</del>
	32
	33
	34
	40
	42
	43
	44
	45
	46
	47
	48
	49
	50
	51
	52

FOIA(b)(7) - (D)

No. of copies 1

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Destroyed by CeeDate 5/22/69

157-958-154

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC,

DATE:

FROM : SA

SUBJECT:

In connection with the destruction of channelizing memoranda, the information contained on the serials listed below was incorporated in a ☐ report ☐ letterhead memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_. Where the serial is accompanied by the file and serial number of the original informant report, the information was not used because it was of no value to the report. The review for the communication checked above was made from \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_.

In accordance with the above, the following serials are to be destroyed.

Page 2	
Volume	Serials (List by serial or serial scope.)
	53 original in
	55 " "
	57 " "
	60 " "
	61 " "
	62 " "
	65 " "
	67 " "
	68 " "
	69 " "
	70 " "
	71 " "
	72 " "
	74 " "
	78 " "
	80 " "
	81 " "

No. of copies \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Destroyed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

*Memorandum*

TO : SAC,

DATE:

FROM : SA

SUBJECT:

In connection with the destruction of channelizing memoranda, the information contained on the serials listed below was incorporated in a ☐ report ☐ letterhead memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_. Where the serial is accompanied by the file and serial number of the original informant report, the information was not used because it was of no value to the report. The review for the communication checked above was made from \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_.

In accordance with the above, the following serials are to be destroyed.

Page 3	
Volume	Serials (List by serial or serial scope.)
	85 orig. in
	89 " "
	91 " "
	92 " "
	97 " "
	100 " "
	104 " "
	105 " "
	106 " "
	107 " "
	108 " "
	109 " "
	110 " "
	115 " "
	116 " "
	118 " "
	119 " "

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

No. of copies \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Destroyed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

*Memorandum*

TO : SAC,

DATE:

FROM : SA

SUBJECT:

In connection with the destruction of channelizing memoranda, the information contained on the serials listed below was incorporated in a ☐ report ☐ letterhead memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_. Where the serial is accompanied by the file and serial number of the original informant report, the information was not used because it was of no value to the report. The review for the communication checked above was made from \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_.

In accordance with the above, the following serials are to be destroyed.

Volume	Serials (List by serial or serial scope.)
	120 orig. in
	122 " "
	123 " "
	124 " "
	132 " "
	135 " "
	136 " "
	139 " "
	145 " "
	148 " "
	150 " "

FOIA (b) (7) - (D)

No. of copies \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Destroyed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-958) (

FROM : STENO CAROL SMITH

SUBJECT: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS  
RM (KLAN)

DATE: 5/22/69

The following is a correlation of information contained in serials 1 through 150 in Jackson file 157-958:

FOIA(b)(7) - (D)

Serial 20 On 2/17/65, informant [ ] advised [ ] he knew of no activity on the part of these individuals since January 1, 1965, and in some instances of the listed individuals he had heard of no activity since he last reported on some of these individuals which was as far back as September, 1964. ERNEST AVANTS was one of the listed individuals.

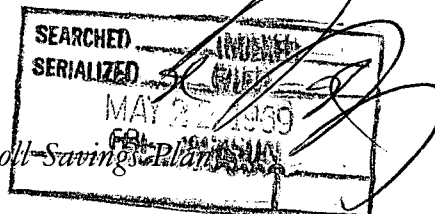
Serial 32 On 9/5/65, [ ] advised [ ] apparently has been used as a source of information by Agents of the FBI and when inquiries are made regarding individuals, [ ] immediately furnishes this information to the individual concerned.

Serial 33 On 9/3/65, [ ] stated that ERNEST AVANTS was kicked out of the WKKKKOM immediately following his arrest by the MHSP in November or December, 1964. Informant stated it was the opinion of the Klansmen that ERNEST AVANTS had "shot his mouth off" and talked too much thereby causing the arrest of the other three individuals. Informant stated that when these four individuals were arrested that two of them were the "sorriest in Adams County" and that the other two were fairly decent individuals. He stated ERNEST AVANTS and JOHN BARBER were the two "sorriest individuals" in Adams County and that JOHN BARBER had also been kicked out of the WKKKKOM. Informant made the comment that "AVANTS would be the last one to know anything."

Serial 34 [ ] advised on 9/26/65, that ERNEST

① - JN  
cc

157-958-150



Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

AVANTS was recently arrested in Jonesville, Louisiana, after he broke into the home belonging to the mayor of that city. Members of Klan organizations in the Jonesville, Louisiana, area have indicated that they are tired of AVANTS coming to that city and causing trouble, and have indicated that if he does not stop these activities he will be dealt with in a severe manner.

Serial 40 [redacted] advised that HENRY MOORE had made a statement that he and ERNEST AVANTS rode around for a couple of hours on the morning before AVANTS was arrested that night by officers of the Adams County Sheriff's Office. Source stated that MOORE had said that AVANTS had made the statement that he thought that he would be arrested in the near future but he made no indication as why he thought he would be arrested. Source advised that HENRY MOORE said that some unknown individuals would testify that AVANTS and FULLER were at the "Barbeque" at the time BEN WHITE was murdered. Source advised that [redacted] had been in touch with MOORE about being an alibi witness for FULLER and AVANTS.

FOIA(b) (6)

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

Source advised on 6/18/66 he attended the preliminary hearing of CLAUDE W. FULLER and ERNEST HENRY AVANTS in Natchez on 6/17/66. Source advised that from testimony he heard from Jones, he is of the opinion that JONES is telling the truth about FULLER and AVANTS' participation in the murder of WHITE but he is not telling the truth about his participation in this murder.

Source advised that the talk on the streets of Natchez re the motive for this crime is that WHITE, sometime in the past, must have caught FULLER or AVANTS stealing someone's cattle.

Serial 42 [redacted] advised on 6/18/66 that ERNEST HENRY AVANTS was never a member of the UKA. In the past, he was a member of the WKKKKOM. Source does not know his status at the present time.

Serial 43 [redacted] advised on 6/20/66 advised that SAMUEL H. BOWERS, JR., and CHARLES BLACKWELL were in Natchez area on 6/15/66 attempting to locate ERNEST H. AVANTS, Lawyer, who is believed to be JOE VUCARRO. They were unable to locate him.

Informant also reported that about two weeks ago, ERNEST H. AVANTS, who has been drinking very heavily lately, was observed at "TINY" LEWIS's bar-be-cue pit under the influence of alcohol and was bragging to some of the Klansmen that he had been in on the killing of a Negro at the shoe shop in Ferriday, Louisiana, across the river from Natchez, a few months ago, and also that he had been in on the killing of two Negroes whose bodies were found floating in the Old Mississippi River near ERNEST PARKER's island about two years ago. The informant advised that while AVANTS has made the statements while in a drunken condition, it should be noted that AVANTS is prone to lie and informant does not know whether there is any truth to this information or not.

Informant advised that arrangements have been made during the past few days at "TINY" LEWIS's bar-be-cue pit near Natchez, to establish an alibi for ERNEST HENRY AVANTS on the day that WHITE was murdered. "TINY" LEWIS's twelve year old child and several Klansmen are believed willing to testify that AVANTS was observed in their presence at the time the killing allegedly took place.

Informant advised that ERNEST HENRY AVANTS was known to have made a trip to see SAM H. BOWERS, JR., Imperial Wizard, a few months ago. Informant was not aware of the purpose of AVANTS' visit to BOWERS.

Informant also advised that AVANTS and CLAUDE FULLER were seen at the Natchez, Adams County Airport, on Saturday, 6/11/66. Informant advised that MOODY JORDAN, who rents airplanes, took CLAUDE FULLER up but would not permit AVANTS to ride because he was drunk. Informant advised that they both had their families with them and he was of the opinion that they would not be using this as a means to destroy any weapons.

Informant advised that he had never known FULLER and AVANTS to hang around together previously and the Saturday they were at the airport was the first time that he knew of them being together. Informant advised that he has heard ERNEST HENRY AVANTS has been hunting for something like this to do for quite some time.



Serial 44 On 7/11/66, [ ] advised that ED FULLER telephonically contacted him re the raising of money for CLAUDE FULLER and ERNEST AVANTS. Informant advised that SAM BOWERS came to see him the night of 6/15/66 after the arrest of CLAUDE FULLER and ERNEST AVANTS on 6/14/66. BOWERS brought with him CHARLES BLACKWELL, an attorney who represents the WKKKOM. Informant stated BOWERS and BLACKWELL talked to Mrs. ERNEST AVANTS inquiring as to what had happened. Informant stated BOWERS has not as yet put out any word through the Klan to collect money for CLAUDE FULLER or ERNEST AVANTS.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Informant advised that ERNEST AVANTS had made several trips via chartered airplane to Laurel, Miss., where informant believes AVANTS contacted SAM BOWERS; however, informant pointed out that these trips were in late February or early March, just following the return of AVANTS and other Klansmen from the HCUA hearings in Washington. Informant stated that during these trips, AVANTS also saw DEAVOURS NIX. Informant pointed out that the plane used by AVANTS was chartered from Moody Jordan Flying Service at the Natchez-Adams Co. Airport and the pilot was furnished by the flying service. Information further pointed out that he had received information that AVANTS was generally drunk when he made these trips.

Informant advised that the parents of ERNEST AVANTS were attempting to get HUGH CUNNINGHAM, an attorney of Jackson, Miss., to represent their son; however, ERNEST AVANTS was refusing to accept the services of HUGH CUNNINGHAM because AVANTS had once gone to CUNNINGHAM requesting him to take a case in which ERNEST AVANTS wished to charge the State of Miss. with an illegal search of his residence, and since CUNNINGHAM refused to accept this case, ERNEST AVANTS was now refusing to accept the advise of his parents in obtaining the services of HUGH CUNNINGHAM.

Serial 45 On 7/8/66, [ ] advised that SAM BOWERS and ERNEST HENRY AVANTS have been seeing a lot of each other. Informant stated that he had determined that AVANTS had been renting an airplane and going to Laurel, Miss.

Informant stated that he also determined that SAM BOWERS had come to Natchez in an effort to see ERNEST AVANTS a day or two after AVANTS was arrested by the Adams Co. Sheriff's Office, Natchez, Miss., in connection with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE, a Negro male, on 6/12/66. Informant stated he feels that BOWERS was instrumental in getting AVANTS to kill BEN CHESTER WHITE. Informant stated BOWERS knew AVANTS had been kicked out of the WKKKKOM at one time and had been taken back on certain conditions. Informant advised that immediately following the arrest of CLAUDE FULLER and ERNEST AVANTS, SAM BOWERS and CHARLES BLACKWELL came to Natchez and talked to DON WILKERSON, J.K. GREER, TINY LEWIS, and Mrs. ERNEST AVANTS. Informant stated he had been told that BOWERS told JACK GREER he had come to Natchez, Miss., to be sure that AVANTS and FULLER had legal counsel.

Serial 46 On 7/7/66, [ ] advised that ERNEST HENRY AVANTS' wife is now working at the Barbeque Pit.

Serial 47 On 7/22/66, [ ] advised he had received information that BILL REILLEY and JOE ZUCCARO, who are the attorneys representing FULLER and AVANTS, are both asking for their money. It is reported that Mrs. GLADYS AVANTS, wife of ERNEST AVANTS, has paid some on her bill.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Informant advised that ERNEST H. AVANTS has been offered the services of HUGH CUNNINGHAM, an attorney in Jackson, Miss., but that AVANTS has refused to accept the services of CUNNINGHAM. Informant stated that he has been told that Mrs. AVANTS, the mother of ERNEST H. AVANTS, formerly worked for HUGH CUNNINGHAM and that when she went to CUNNINGHAM to request his services that CUNNINGHAM allegedly told Mrs. AVANTS that he would represent her son for no charges whatsoever. Informant stated the WKKKKOM is attempting to raise money for the families of CLAUDE FULLER and ERNEST AVANTS.

Serial 48 On 9/26/66, [ ] advised that during the past couple of weeks a collection has been taken up at the Armstrong

Tire and Rubber Company in Natchez for the families of ERNEST AVANTS and CLAUDE FULLER.

Serial 49 On 9/19/66, [ ] advised BILL RILEY had stated he was charging \$2,500 to defend AVANTS should AVANTS decide to have RILEY represent him.

FOIA(b) (6)

FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

Serial 50 On 9/28/66, [ ] advised [ ] while AVANTS incarcerated Adams County Jail.

Serial 51 On 10/18/66, [ ] advised that BILL RILEY is an attorney in Natchez, Miss., who is representing FULLER and AVANTS on their murder charge in Natchez. He related that RILEY had been in touch with ROBERT SHELTON in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and had advised SHELTON that rumors were being spread in the Natchez, Miss., area that SHELTON had fired E. L. MC DANIEL and others from the State Office of the UKA because they had been stealing money from the state treasury and also running around with women. According to RILEY, the above rumor is hurting FULLER and AVANTS in preparation for their coming trial, and he requested that SHELTON attempt to stop the above rumor. Source stated that SAM BOWERS had indicated to REGGIE CARTER that he had no one to assist in the preparation of the defense for FULLER and AVANTS in their coming murder trial.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Serial 52 On 10/28/66, [ ] advised the WCPLDF would not give any money for a legal defense of AVANTS in connection with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE.

Serial 53 On 10/19/66, [ ] advised that he had recently gone to Jackson, Miss., where he contacted HARRY DEAN and ELMORE GREAVES, the legal defense fund, regarding the possibility of obtaining their help in the defense of ERNEST AVANTS and his trial regarding the killing of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source stated that he had been told that the legal defense fund would not be available for assisting either FULLER or AVANTS inasmuch as civil rights was not an issue involved in the WHITE murder. Source advised that SAM BOWERS and CHARLES BLACKWELL had been in Natchez, Miss., several times during the recent past with regard to the ERNEST AVANTS - CLAUDE FULLER case. He advised that BOWERS has stated that they will try to assist AVANTS but will not be able to give much money at the present time. Source advised that he had learned

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that GLADYS AVANTS had recently gone to Laurel, Miss., where she met with SAM BOWERS and was given approximately \$200 to assist in obtaining legal counsel for ERNEST AVANTS.

Source advised that he had heard that ERNEST AVANTS' father had made the statement that arrangements could be made for the Negro female who had allegedly witnessed his son in the area of the BEN CHESTER WHITE residence on the night of the slaying not to show up for the trial.

Source advised that ERNEST AVANTS had told [redacted] who in turn had told [redacted] that [redacted] was the only individual who could positively place him at BEN CHESTER WHITE's residence.

[redacted]

Serial 55 On 11/20/66, [redacted] advised that Lawyer RILEY who is defending JONES, AVANTS, and FULLER has indicated that everything that was used in the preliminary hearing cannot be used in the trial as JONES could now say that he had nothing to do with it and thus the information supposedly furnished by him could not be introduced in court.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Serial 57 On 12/16/66, [redacted] advised subject was released from the Adams County Jail on 12/16/66. This is the case where AVANTS is charged with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source did not know the identity of the individuals who put up the bail for AVANTS.

Serial 60 On 12/16/66, [redacted] advised \$600 was raised raffling a set of tires in an effort to raise \$500 for legal fees for JONES in the Fuller, Avants, Jones vs State (BEN CHESTER WHITE murder). Attorney RILEY of Natchez had told FULLER and AVANTS that JONES could either help their defense or put them in it. FULLER and AVANTS have been permitted to make bond.

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Serial 61 [ ] advised on 1/10/67 [ ] that his last contact with SAM BOWERS was in the fall of 1966 when BOWERS was at the Bar-B-Que Pit discussing "raising money" for the defense of ERNEST AVANTS and CLAUDE FULLER. Source stated that at this time BOWERS let him know that he, BOWERS, did not want the source in on the raising of the money for AVANTS and FULLER. Source stated that ERNEST AVANTS was released from the Adams County Jail on 12/16/66 on bond and that shortly thereafter AVANTS went to the Bar-B-Que Pit and began telling everyone that the source was an informant of the FBI.

Serial 63 On 3/3/67, [ ] advised AVANTS not known to be a member of Silver Dollar Group.

Serial 65 On 3/14/67, Former [ ] advised that "several surprises will come up during the course of the murder trial of CLAUDE FULLER and ERNEST AVANTS."

Serial 67 On 3/17/67, Former [ ] advised subject member of Old Originals, WKKKKOM and UKA, but never mentioned Silver Dollar.

Serial 68 On 3/28/67, [ ] advised that when subject gets "juiced-up" on Jax, he will do most anything - otherwise he is OK.

Serial 69 On 3/28/67, [ ] advised JEWEL BURT is used on committee to obtain funds in behalf of AVANTS in the "BEN CHESTER WHITE" murder case.

Serial 70 On 4/7/67, [ ] advised that [ ] and ERNEST AVANTS were former members of the WKKKKOM until they were kicked out for their heavy drinking. Source advised that AVANTS and FULLER sawed down the first roadside sign that the Negro (FNU) DUMAS placed on the roadway near TINY LEWIS' Bar-B-Que Pit, Natchez, Mississippi. Source also stated that AVANTS and [ ] shot into the other signs which DUMAS placed around Natchez, Miss., advertising the Dumas Motel.

Source stated ERNEST HENRY AVANTS was a member of THE OKKKK [ ]. Source stated that the day following the killing of BEN CHESTER WHITE, FULLER, AVANTS, and their wives and children went on a picnic

near Pretty Creek, Miss. Source stated that he heard also that AVANTS and FULLER rode around in an airplane over the area where WHITE was killed, however, did not know who flew or owned the airplane. Source stated that shortly before the killing of BEN CHESTER WHITE, before June, 1966, he was approached by CLAUDE FULLER who asked him if he was interested in joining a new action group. Shortly thereafter the source met with AVANTS who told him the new group of FULLER's was to be known as the Cottonmouth Moccasin Group and AVANTS created the name. Source stated that he knows CLAUDE FULLER, ERNEST AVANTS, JAMES JACKSON, and a tall blond boy who is a millwright at the International Paper Co. and a close associate of FULLER, were associated with this group.

Source advised [redacted]

[redacted] while AVANTS was in jail.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Serial 71 On 4/6/67, [redacted] advised subject was a person he knew and had furnished info about previously.

Serial 72 On 3/31/67, [redacted] advised subject was in OKKK, WKKKKOM, had heard he was to be tried 4/4/67 for murder at Natchez, Miss.

Serial 74 On 4/13/67, [redacted] stated on Sat. night, 4/8/67, AVANTS met RED GLOVER for the first time at TINY LEWIS Bar-B-Que Pit, Natchez, Miss., and was questioned about the JONES murder trial.

Serial 78 On 4/26/67, [redacted] advised that [redacted] had told him that he had been on several "jobs" with AVANTS.

Serial 80 On 5/13/67, [redacted] was shown photos in the Silver Dollar Album, and stated he knew about listed subject but knew nothing pertinent. (Incorporated in report)

Serial 81 On 5/3&8/67, [redacted] advised a committee composed of CHARLES DAVIDSON, REGGIE CARTER, and JOE HARDY is going to contact ERNEST AVANTS to warn him from continuing to "run off at the mouth." Stated JOE HARDY wants to "whip" him but DAVIDSON is against violence of any kind at this time. (Incorporated in report)

Serial 85 On 5/6&22/67, [ ] advised WAYNE REED advised him on 5/17/67, that ERNEST AVANTS had been "shut up" and that no one was to have anything more to do with him. (incorporated in report)

Serial 89 On 6/17&21/67, [ ] advised that he was with BILLY BUCKLES at Tiny Lewis' Bar-B-Que Pit on Highway 61 North on the evening of 6/20/67. BUCKLES had an argument with ERNEST AVANTS, who was also at the Bar-B-Que Pit about the upcoming million dollar civil suit being brought against the White Knights by the heirs of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source advised that BILLY BUCKLES, JULIUS HARPER, SAM BOWERS, ERNEST AVANTS, CLAUDE FULLER, (FNU) NIX and TOMMIE JONES are all included in the group to be sued. Source continued that BUCKLES' argument with AVANTS was based on the suit against the White Knights for killing BEN CHESTER WHITE when they did not have anything to do with it. Source advised that TRAVIS BUCKLEY, the attorney from Laurel, Miss., was also at the Bar-B-Que Pit and was talking to ERNEST AVANTS most of the time. (Incorporated in report).

Serial 91 On 6/27/67, [ ] advised that while in TINY LEWIS' Bar-B-Que Pit, Highway 61 North, at approximately 3:00 PM on 6/23/67, BILLY BUCKLES told him to contact J. K. GREER that evening and tell him to bring ERNEST AVANTS to BUCKLES' house on Sunday morning. Source asked him the purpose of this meeting and was informed by BUCKLES that AVANTS had put his head in a noose and he was "fixing to get it out".

On 6/23/67, ERNEST AVANTS was present at the Bar-B-Que Pit in a drunken condition. Source advised that AVANTS was arguing with BUCKLEY but source could not determine what about. Approximately 15 minutes after AVANTS left the Bar-B-Que Pit, CLAUDE FULLER stopped in and stated that he had just heard that AVANTS was in jail, whereupon he called AVANTS' house and got no answer.

Serial 92 On 6/27/67, [ ] stated he visited ERNEST HENRY AVANTS at his Natchez residence on the morning of 6/27/67. AVANTS told source he had recently returned from the Veterans Administration Hospital in Jackson, Miss. AVANTS did not explain the reason he was at this hospital. He merely stated prescriptions are unbelievably cheaper when purchased at a VA Hospital. Source advised he had joked BUCK PINTARD, AVANTS' attorney, that he could see what AVANTS and PINTARD were up to, i.e. attempting to build a case of insanity as a defense for AVANTS. PINTARD then said AVANTS' problem is alcohol. SAM BOWERS spent a day with AVANTS last week, and expounded on the internal situation in the U. S. today. AVANTS did not indicate to source what the defendants plan to do about the damage suit. Source reported that in his contacts with AVANTS, he had learned nothing about the disposal of the guns used in the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder. (Incorporated in report)

Serial 97 On 8/1/67, [ ] advised that Klansmen in the Natchez area are angry with ERNEST AVANTS because of his alleged confessions to the FBI and Adams County SO re AVANTS' participation in the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. REGGIE CARTER, JIMMY HOUSTON WHITE, and JOE LEE HARDY have gone to AVANTS in the past to give him moral support and to convince him that it would be much wiser for him to keep his mouth shut. (Incorporated in report)

Serial 100 On 9/5/67, [ ] advised that subject was a member of the old OKKKKOM. (Incorporated in report)

Serial 104 On 9/11/67, [ ] advised the WKKKKOM terminated their use of a \$4,000 building on property of SELF HANEY, Morgantown Heights Road, just outside Natchez, Miss., because ERNEST AVANTS got drunk one night and went out and shot up the building.

Serial 105 On 10/17/67, RODNEY BRITT advised captioned subject shot up the fancy building the WKKKKOM was meeting in on Morgantown Road.



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Serial 106 On 10/25/67, Former [ ] gave no information re AVANTS in this serial.

Serial 107 On 10/25/67, [ ] advised that on Sunday afternoon, October 22, 1967, ERNEST AVANTS and his wife had dinner at Jughead's Inn on Deer Park Lake, La. AVANTS told ED FULLER that SAM BOWERS would be in Natchez on 10/25/67 and wanted FULLER to meet BOWERS. FULLER told AVANTS that he did not care where BOWERS was, was not going to see him, and did not want him at his place of business. AVANTS became extremely upset and tried to order FULLER to go but FULLER immediately departed the restaurant. (Inc. in rep)

Serial 108 On 11/6/67, [ ] gave no info re AVANTS in this serial.

Serial 109 On 11/13/67, [ ] advised that at the SDG meeting held on 11/12/67 RALEIGH JACKSON GLOVER brought up the conversation about raising money for individuals who have pending trials in Natchez area. He stated that JAMES LLOYD JONES and ERNEST HENRY AVANTS had trials coming up in the near future and they had no attorney to represent them, in view of the fact their former attorneys had dropped them since they had no funds to pay the attorneys. Source stated that he has heard that AVANTS contacted the Adams County DA during the past couple of weeks and supposedly gave him some information about the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder case. Source stated that AVANTS supposedly made the comment that if he did testify in that case, he knows that ED FULLER would kill him. (incorporated in report)

Serial 110 On 11/22/67, [ ] advised that on Tuesday evening, November 21, 1967, TRAVIS BUCKLEY and the wife of ERNEST AVANTS had dinner at Jughead's on the old river at Deer Park, La. (incorporated in report)

Serial 115 On 12/7/67, [ ] advised a jury was selected on 12/7/67 for the trial of ERNEST HENRY AVANTS in Natchez, Mississippi. Source stated there are four Klansmen or former Klansmen on this jury. He did not know these Klansmen by name but stated he will attempt to obtain their names. (incorporated in report)

JN 157-958

FOIA(b) (6)

FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

Serial 116 On 12/5,8/67, [REDACTED] provided a list of jury members on subject's trial.

Serial 118 On 12/13/67, [REDACTED] advised that JOE LEE HARDY stated that a Mr. GREER of Fenwick, Miss., had told him upon one occasion that [REDACTED]

Source advised that HARDY was angry concerning the acquittal of ERNEST AVANTS for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. HARDY was concerned that the reason AVANTS had been acquitted was because AVANTS had turned state's evidence. HARDY is afraid that AVANTS has talked. Source was of the opinion AVANTS knows of many of the jobs HARDY has been on. HARDY continued that he and [REDACTED] feel that AVANTS had [REDACTED]

HARDY stated that AVANTS owned a Lueger that the FBI had been interested in. AVANTS had given this Lueger to SAM BLACKMAN, reason unknown. BLACKMAN returned Lueger to GLADYS AVANTS. He asked for the Lueger back a short time following this but GLADYS AVANTS refused. HARDY advised that when AVANTS had been first arrested in the spring of 1967, he had given \$720 in cash to GLADYS AVANTS. This was the proceeds of a Klan collection for AVANTS' defense in the BEN CHESTER WHITE trial. This proceeded the time when AVANTS began talking in the Klan's opinion too frequently to law enforcement officials. (inc. in rep)

Serial 119 On 12/20/67, [REDACTED] advised JAMES LEE SCARBOROUGH appears to be quite concerned over the acquittal over ERNEST HENRY AVANTS in his recent trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. SCARBOROUGH stated that in his opinion the "Feds" had "thrown" the case in order that AVANTS would turn states evidence and testify against CLAUDE FULLER in FULLER's trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. (incorporated in report)

Serial 120 On 12/29/67 and 1/3/68, [ ] advised that minutemen warning stickers had been placed on the car of ERNEST H. AVANTS several months ago. Source explained that this was at the time when AVANTS was talking to law enforcement officials more that the Klansmen in the area felt he should. Source continued that the general consensus of Klansmen in the Adams County, Miss. - Concordia Parish, La., area is that AVANTS turned state evidence and that this is the reason that he was acquitted in his trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source stated that many Klansmen feel that AVANTS will testify against FULLER in FULLER's upcoming trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source continued that most Klansmen will reserve opinion on AVANTS until after the FULLER trial. Efforts to sell tickets for the legal defense of AVANTS met with little success. (incorporated in report)

Serial 122 On 2/5, 11/68, [ ] advised that JOE LEE HARDY and [ ] broke into the home of ERNEST AVANTS and stole a .22 rifle.

Serial 123 On 2/21/68, [ ] advised AVANTS was a member of all Klan groups, with the exception of UKA, and was too sorry to get in that group. (inc. in rep)

Serial 124 On 3/8/68, [ ] advised subject reportedly has SCARBROUGH worried because he talked SCARBROUGH into doing something that could put him in the penitentiary for conspiracy. (inc. in rep)

Serial 132 [ ] advised on 4/15/68 advised ERNEST AVANTS, among others, should be concerned about as far as violence in Natchez area is concerned.

Serial 135 On 5/8/68, [ ] advised that BILLY D. BUCKLES contacted ERNEST AVANTS on 5/3/68 at "TINY" LEWIS' Bar-B-Que Pit in Natchez, Miss. AVANTS told BUCKLES he had been to the preliminary hearing for the thirteen Klansmen arrested for possession of explosives in the Jackson, Miss., area.

JN 157-958

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

AVANTS indicated "The way I got it, they have plenty of explosives left," that they want the explosives moved. Source stated that AVANTS asked BUCKLES if he had any ideas, to which BUCKLES replied "Yes, I have one. Stay as far away from 'um as you can." Source stated AVANTS said, "Yes, that is true, but they want the explosives moved."

Serial 136 On 5/2/68, [ ] advised subject called into office at IP and told to work or he would be fired. AVANTS took week of KING funeral off to celebrate.

Serial 139 On 5/29/68, [ ] advised that AVANTS told BILLY D. BUCKLES on 5/16/68 that he (AVANTS) and [ ] recently were in Jackson, Miss., and "moved the stuff", referring to explosives. Source stated AVANTS had previously mentioned, after dynamite was located and confiscated in Jackson, Miss., from Klansmen, that there was plenty left and AVANTS was seeking advice as to the moving of the explosives.

Serial 145 On 11/4,11,15/68, [ ] advised BILLY BUCKLES advised DON WILKINSON that the heirs of BEN CHESTER WHITE were bringing a million dollar suit against JONES, FJLLER and AVANTS and other leaders of the WKKKKOM. ERNEST AVANTS is reportedly drinking heavily and is extremely upset over the recent trial in Vicksburg, Miss. [ ]

Serial 148 On 2/14,18/69, [ ]

Serial 150 On 4/24; 5/1/69, [ ] advised that on 4/29/69, DON WILKINSON was at the Barbeque Pit owned by E. L. "TINY" LEWIS and at that time saw the mother

JN 157-958

of ERNEST AVANTS. She indicated to WILKINSON that ERNEST stays drunk continually and that she is suing ERNEST's wife, GLADYS, GLADYS' sister and her brother-in-law, and ERNEST because of the matter concerning their cheating her out of some lots in Franklin Co., Miss. The word is out among the Minutemen and former Klan members not to trust ERNEST AVANTS at all. He no longer is an active member with the Minutemen nor any other Klan organization.

Serial

DIRECTOR, FBI (157-3701)

5/3/69

SAC, JACKSON (157-958) (C)

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS

RM (KLAN)

(OO: JACKSON)

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

[REDACTED] has, on numerous occasions, within the past several months, indicated that the subject is no longer active in any Minutemen, klan or other hate-type organizations within the Mississippi area. Therefore, subject to reopening the matter if he does become active, this case is being closed at Jackson UACB.

2 - Bureau (RM)

① - Jackson

NHS/clm (3)

157-958-149

Searched	____
Serialized	____
Indexed	____
Filed	____

F B I

Date: 11/21/68

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE DEFERRED  
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR (44-33209)

FROM: JACKSON (157-6253)

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, CLAUDE W. FULLER, JAMES LLOYD  
JONES; BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM; CR - FFA.

REJNTEL NOVEMBER TWENTY, LAST.

~~SUBJECT~~ <sup>Avants</sup> LOCATED AND INTERVIEWED EVENING OF NOVEMBER  
TWENTY, LAST, AT RESIDENCE ONE ONE FOUR HAMMETT STREET, NATCHEZ,  
MISS.

SUBJECT ADVISED THAT HE REMEMBERS MAKING THE CALL TO THE  
BUREAU, BUT DOES NOT RECALL EXACT DATE OF CALL. SUBJECT  
STATED CALLED BUREAU TO PROVIDE INFORMATION CONCERNING  
TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONIES OF SAS ROBERT E. BOYLE AND ALLAN  
N. KORNBLUM WHICH HE SAID WERE FALSE. SUBJECT STATED AGENTS  
LIED ABOUT EVERYTHING EXCEPT THEIR NAMES AND EMPLOYER.

IN PHONE CONVERSATION TO BUREAU HE DENIED THE FOLLOWING:  
MAKING ANY CLAIM CIA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEATH OF PRESIDENT  
KENNEDY, MAKING STATEMENT THAT FBI HAD KILLED THREE PEOPLE IN

Approved: *[Signature]* Jackson  
(1 - 157-6253) (1 - 157-958)  
PWR/JS Special Agent in Charge  
(2)

Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_

Searched 157-958-146  
Serialized W  
Indexed W  
Filed W

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

PAGE TWO

MISS., AND THAT THERE WAS CONSPIRACY WITHIN OUR LOCAL FIELD OFFICE TO KILL MORE, MAKING REFERENCE TO BUREAU PERSONNEL AS SMUTTY, NASTY, DIRTY PEOPLE. SUBJECT STATED THAT AT NO TIME DID HE DEMAND TO SPEAK WITH MR. HOOVER AND DID NOT DEMAND AN ANSWER WITHIN THREE WEEKS. HE STATED HE REALIZED PRIVATE CITIZENS DO NOT DEMAND THINGS OF INDIVIDUALS SUCH AS MR. HOOVER. AVANTS ADVISED HE HAS A HIGH REGARD FOR MR. HOOVER AND IN NO WAY IMPLIED A THREAT DURING HIS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION.

AVANTS STATED AFTER CONFERRING WITH HIS ATTORNEY, TRAVIS BUCKLEY, HE DID NOT DESIRE AND REFUSED TO TALK WITH MR. HOOVER NOW INASMUCH AS IT WOULD ONLY GET HIM INTO MORE TROUBLE AND NOTHING WOULD BE DONE ABOUT IT ANYWAY. TRAVIS BUCKLEY, WHITE MALE, KLAN ATTORNEY, WAS SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS ON STATE CHARGE OF KIDNAPING ON MAY THREE, LAST, AND DISBARED AS AN ATTORNEY; HOWEVER, HE HAS APPEALED HIS CONVICTION AND DISBARMENT. THROUGH BUCKLEY'S ASSOCIATIONS HE HAS CONSISTENTLY

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge



F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

PAGE THREE

DENOUNCED THE FBI.

AVANTS ADVISED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE STATEMENT THAT HE HAD CALLED ALLEGING THAT BOYLE AND KORNBLUM TESTIFIED AGAINST AND THEIR TESTIMONIES WERE FALSE, ALL OTHER STATEMENTS CONCERNING HIS CONVERSATION WERE "PROPAGANDA". AVANTS STATED, "THE REASON THE FBI IS SO MESSED UP IS THAT WE DON'T GET ANYTHING STRAIGHT."

AVANTS CONCLUDED INTERVIEW BY ADVISING THAT HE HAD NOTHING MORE TO SAY CONCERNING HIS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION OR ANY OF HIS ALLEGED ACTIVITIES OR STATEMENTS.

AVANTS "WAS SET STRAIGHT" ON ALL ISSUES AND WAS TOLD THAT AGENTS BOYLE AND KORNBLUM TESTIFIED TRUTHFULLY IN COURT TO AVANTS ADMISSIONS.

LHM FOLLOWS. END.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (44-33209)

DATE: 10/4/68

FROM : SAC, JACKSON (157-6253) (P\*)

SUBJECT: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS,  
CLAUDE W. FULLER,  
JAMES LLOYD JONES;  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CIVIL RIGHTS - FFA

Re Jackson let and LHM to Bureau 8/19/68.

Enclosed herewith are four copies of an LHM which is self-explanatory.

One copy is being designated for the United States Attorney, Jackson, Miss.

The Special Agent referred to in the enclosed LHM is SA GEORGE P. GAMBLIN.

2 - Bureau (Enc. 4) (RM)  
⑤ - Jackson (2- 157-6253) (1- 157-958)  
(1- 157-796) (1- 157-6254)

GPG/bdb  
(7)

*clh*

*[Handwritten signature]*

*Reason  
to Roemer  
10/3/68*

157-958-144

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized *ab* \_\_\_\_\_  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed *ab* \_\_\_\_\_

*M. O. Weill MJO*  
*Roemer*



5010-108-01

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Jackson, Mississippi  
October 4, 1968

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS,  
CLAUDE W. FULLER,  
JAMES LLOYD JONES;  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM

Reference is made to Jackson letterhead memorandum captioned as above and dated August 19, 1968.

On October 3, 1968, Lennox L. Forman, District Attorney, Meadville, Mississippi, advised a Special Agent of the FBI that due to insufficient evidence, he is not going to prosecute Claude W. Fuller or James Lloyd Jones for the murder of Ben Chester White in the Adams County Circuit Court.

He noted Ernest Henry Avants had been tried and acquitted by a jury in Adams County.

Mr. Forman reiterated his desire to turn his evidence in this case over to the United States Attorney in Jackson, Mississippi, for prosecution under the Civil Rights statute.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

- 4 - Bureau
- 1 - USA, Jackson
- ③ - Jackson (2 - 157-6253) (1- 157-958)  
(1- 157-796) (1- 157-6254)

GPG/bdb

(10)

-1\*-

157-958-143

Searched	_____
Serialized	_____
Indexed	_____
Filed	_____

*M. O'Neill*

**VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING SUBJECTS OF KLAN AND  
WHITE HATE-TYPE ORGANIZATIONS**

MEMORANDUM RE: **ERNEST HENRY AVANTS**Office File: **JN 157-958**

The following is the most recent place of residence, employment, employment address, and organizational position of subject as contained in the files of this office:

Residence: **114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Miss.**Employment: **International Paper Company**Address: **Natchez, Miss.**

Organization and Position: **AVANTS has been excluded from all Klan organizations, primarily due to the fact that the Klan feels AVANTS talks too much.**

It is requested the place of employment, address of employment, residence address, and organizational position of subject be verified and the proper notation made below. It should also be determined if the subject still meets the criteria for investigation as set forth in Section 122A of the Manual of Instructions.

Date: 10/3/68Verified by SA: Michael J. O'NeillAn LHM should be submitted to Bureau & interested agencies ☐ Yes ☒ NoFile Reviewed 5/14/68☐ Subject meets above criteria☒ Subject does not meet above criteria

(For office-use-only)

Make P\*

Date: 10/4/68Approved: [Signature]

1- 157-958

JAA/cmb

(1)

157-958-142

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 2 1968	
FBI - JACKSON	

1. M.O. Neill [Signature]  
2. #5 Desk [Signature]

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (44-33209)

FROM : SAC, JACKSON (157-6253) (P\*)

DATE: 8/19/68

SUBJECT: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS,  
CLAUDE W. FULLER,  
JAMES LLOYD JONES;  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CR - FFA  
(OO: JN)

Re Jackson airtel and LHM to Bureau dated  
6/11/68.

Enclosed herewith are four (4) copies of an  
LHM which is self explanatory.

One copy is being designated for the USA,  
Jackson, Miss.

The Special Agent referred to in the enclosed  
LHM is SA GEORGE P. GAMBLIN.

2-Bureau (Enc. 4) (RM)  
5-Jackson (2: 157-6253)  
(X: 157-958)  
(1: 157-796)  
(1: 157-6254)

GPG/mlt  
(7)

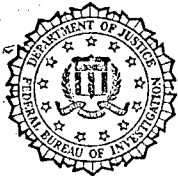


5010-108-01

157-958-141

Searched	_____
Serialized	<i>cf</i> _____
Indexed	_____
Filed	<i>cf</i> _____

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Jackson, Mississippi

August 19, 1968

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, CLAUDE W.  
FULLER, JAMES LLOYD JONES; BEN  
CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM

Reference is made to Jackson letterhead memorandum captioned as above dated June 11, 1968.

On August 15, 1968, Lennox L. Foreman, District Attorney, Meadville, Mississippi, advised a Special Agent of the FBI that after a review of the facts in this case, he is passing the case to the files.

He pointed out there is no indication that James Lloyd Jones or Ernest Henry Avants will ever testify against Claude W. Fuller in this matter. Mr. Foreman said that the only evidence he has against Claude W. Fuller is hearsay evidence by accomplices and unless James Lloyd Jones and Ernest Henry Avants are willing to testify against Fuller, he has no case against Fuller.

Mr. Foreman stated that there are too many former members of the Ku Klux Klan with family connections in Adams County, Mississippi, to obtain a suitable jury which would convict Claude W. Fuller and James Lloyd Jones in this case.

He pointed out during the trial of Ernest Henry Avants, he went through 211 prospective jurors to get twelve men which acquitted Avants. Mr. Foreman said in view of the foregoing, he does not intend to prosecute Fuller or James Lloyd Jones and would like to turn his evidence over to the United States Attorney in Jackson, Mississippi, for prosecution under the Civil Rights statute.

4-Bureau (44-33209)

1-USA, Jackson

5-Jackson (2: 157-6253) (1: 157-958)

(1: 157-796) (1: 157-6254)

GPG/mlt

(10) mlt

157-958-140  
Searched

Serialized *cf*

Indexed

Filed *cf*

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, CLAUDE W.  
FULLER, JAMES LLOYD JONES

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2\*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Jackson, Mississippi

June 11, 1968

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, CLAUDE W.  
FULLER, JAMES LLOYD JONES; BEN  
CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM

On June 10, 1968, Edwin E. Benoist, Jr., County Attorney, Adams County, Natchez, Mississippi, advised a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that he expects action on the case of James Lloyd Jones in Circuit Court, as an accessory after the fact for the murder of Ben Chester White, during the July term, 1968.

Attorney Benoist stated that he expects Jones to enter a plea of guilty to the charge.

He pointed out Ernest Henry Avants has been acquitted and the State has no case against Claude W. Fuller, unless Avants and Jones are cooperative and willing to testify against Fuller.

Attorney Benoist stated Avants and Jones may, in due time, be willing to testify against Claude W. Fuller, but at the present time, both Jones and Avants believe Fuller's brother, Edward Fuller, would kill the two if they did testify against his brother, Claude W. Fuller.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

4 - Bureau (RM) 1 - USA, JN, Miss.  
5 - Jackson (157-6253) ① - (157-958) 1 - (157-796) 1 - (157-6254)  
GPG/bjk (10) *gh* *SE* 1\* *N. O'Neill* *80*

157-958-138

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized *cm*  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed *ms*



F B I

Date: 6/11/68

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL  
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-33209)  
FROM: SAC, JACKSON (157-6253) (P)

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, CLAUDE W.  
FULLER, JAMES LLOYD JONES; BEN  
CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CR - FFA  
(00: Jackson)

Re Jackson airtel and LHM to the Bureau, 4/16/68.

Enclosed herewith are four (4) copies of an LHM,  
which is self-explanatory.

The Special Agent referred to in the enclosed LHM  
is SA GEORGE P. GAMBLIN.

One copy of the LHM is being furnished the U. S.  
Attorney, Jackson, Mississippi.

3 - Bureau (Enc.4) (RM)  
5 - Jackson (157-6253)  
① - (157-958)  
1 - (157-796)  
1 - (157-6254)

GPG/bjk (8) *gpg*

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge

Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_

157-958-137  
Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized *um*  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed *ma*

*M. O'Neill MGO*

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Date received <b>11/5, 19, 27/68</b>	Received from (name or symbol number) <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	Received by <b>SA LESTER L. AMANN</b>
Method of delivery (check appropriate blocks) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> by telephone <input type="checkbox"/> by mail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> orally <input type="checkbox"/> recording device <input type="checkbox"/> written by Informant		
If orally furnished and reduced to writing by Agent:  Dictated <u>11/27/68</u> to <u>m/b</u>  Transcribed <u>11/29/68</u> <u>clm</u>  Authenticated by Informant _____		Date of Report <b>11/27/68</b>  Date(s) of activity  <b>11/1 - 11/26/68</b>
Brief description of activity or material  <b>Info re meeting of SAM BOWERS, TRAVIS BUCKLEY, and ERNEST AVANTS at Louin, Miss., 11/2-3/68; miscellaneous info re WKKKKOM members.</b>		File where original is located if not attached <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
Remarks:  <u>INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE ENCLOSED REPORT, IF USED IN A REPORT BEING PREPARED FOR DISSEMINATION, SHOULD BE SUITABLY PARAPHRASED IN ORDER TO ADEQUATELY PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THIS INFORMANT.</u>		

1 -   
1 - 157-18 (SAM BOWERS)  
1 - 157-3484 (DEAVOURS NIX)  
1 - 157-5409 (TRAVIS BUCKLEY)  
① - 157- (ERNEST AVANTS)  
1 - 157-9542 (SONNY COOLEY)  
1 - 157- (HARRELL STRINGER)

*Reamer*  
*Stutter*  
*4/3/69*  
*[Signature]*

Block Stamp

**157-958-147**

SEARCHED <i>in</i>	INDEXED <i>in</i>
SERIALIZED <i>in</i>	FILED <i>in</i>
NOV 29 1968	
FBI - JACKSON	

*Roemer* *[Signature]*

SAM BOWERS,  
ERNEST AVANTS,  
TRAVIS BUCKLEY

On 11/27/68, source advised that on the weekend of 11/2-3/68, SAM BOWERS, TRAVIS BUCKLEY, and ERNEST AVANTS spent the weekend at BUCKLEY's home in Louin, Miss. Source stated that AVANTS had come to Laurel on Friday, 11/1/68, and spent that night at John's Cafe getting drunk. Source stated that BOWERS accompanied AVANTS to Louin, but it was not known what the meeting was for or what was discussed at the meeting.

DEAVOURS NIX,  
SAM BOWERS

On 11/27/68, source advised that DEAVOURS NIX was heard to make the remark that he was with SAM BOWERS when BOWERS was arrested in a restaurant at Hattiesburg, Miss. Source advised that NIX stated that he, himself, was scared to death when the officers arrested BOWERS and felt that he, NIX, would also be arrested. He stated a lot of people thought BOWERS was cool and calm when he was arrested, but NIX stated, "You should have seen his face turn white when the officers took him away".

FOIA(b) (6)

FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

SONNY COOLEY

Source advised that SONNY COOLEY has not been frequenting John's Cafe lately because [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Source advised that COOLEY used to be a free talker about the klan in Jones County, but has not been in John's Cafe in several weeks

DEAVOURS NIX

Source advised on 11/27/68, that NIX still has a "mysterious" girl friend in the Laurel area and that this girl is constantly calling NIX at his restaurant. Source advised that NIX's wife, SYBIL, is somewhat aware of the "affair" and is attempting to determine who the girl is.

HARRELL STRINGER

Source advised on 11/27/68, that STRINGER, cousin of BUD STRINGER of Laurel, was helping to get bonds signed to get the DAHMER defendants released at Hattiesburg, Miss.

2\*

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date December 12, 1967

Mr. CHARLES STRICKLAND, Manager, Sporting Goods Department, Sears Roebuck and Company, 420 Hay Street, Fayetteville, North Carolina, advised that at the request of authorities from Mississippi he had conducted an extensive search of records and sales invoices in an effort to locate information concerning the sale of an M-1 carbine rifle bearing serial number 14643 and had been unable to locate any record whatsoever of that store ever receiving or selling that rifle. He advised on December 8, 1967, he advised Mississippi authorities by telegram of the above information.

Mr. STRICKLAND then assisted Special Agents LACY M. WALTHALL, JR., and JOHN S. SALSBERG in examining all existing available records pertaining to the sale of guns. No sales invoices of guns for 1963 could be located. Located in a permanent record book was the listing of the sale of two M-1 carbines in the year 1963; however, there was no serial number recorded on either sale.

These sales were as follows:

September 16, 1963, RAY HUTSON, M.P., 1/325, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

November 1, 1963, L. C. ROBINSON, Company A, 2/501, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Mr. STRICKLAND stated the above M-1 carbines are the only weapons sold by his store which are obtained from Universal Firearms, Hialeah, Florida.

157-958-134

SEARCHED <u>h</u>	INDEXED <u>h</u>
SERIALIZED <u>h</u>	FILED <u>h</u>
MAY - 2 1968	
FBI - JACKSON	

*M. O'Neill*

On 12/11/67 at Fayetteville, N. C. File # CE 44-1325

by SA's LACY M. WALTHALL, JR. and  
JOHN S. SALSBERG LMW:dh Date dictated 12/11/67

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Date prepared

Date received

4/18/68

Received from (name or symbol number)

Received by

SAs JOHN A. PFEIFER and  
MERRIMAN D. DIVEN

Method of delivery (check appropriate blocks)



in person



by telephone



by mail



orally



recording device



written by informant

If orally furnished and reduced to writing by Agent:

Date

4/19/68

to

cst

Dictated

Transcribed

4/22/68

Authenticated  
by Informant

Date of Report

4/18/68

Date(s) of activity

4/1 - 18/68

Brief description of activity or material

WKKKKOM group continues to meet in Natchez,  
Miss., about 2:00 PM Sundays at the Glass  
Kitchen. Associates of DEXTER BYRD set out.  
BYRD's attorney has told him to tell no one,  
even his wife, about the shooting of BENNY  
SAUNDERS, JR., on 4/11/68.

File where original is located if not attached

Remarks:

INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT MUST BE CAREFULLY  
PARAPHRASED WHEN DISSEMINATED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF  
SOURCE.

10 - Jackson

- (1 - 105-WKKKKOM)
- (1 - 157-NATCHEZ UNIT, WKKKKOM)
- (1 - 157-DEXTER BYRD: SHOOTING OF  
BENNY SAUNDERS, JR., NEGRO  
MALE, 4/11/68)
- (1 - 157-DEXTER BYRD)
- (1 - 157-REGGIE CARTER)
- (1 - 157-ERNEST AVANTS)
- (1 - 157-JOE LEE HARDY)
- (1 - 157-HOOK SAVILLE)
- (1 - 157-DALLAS "PETE" ROBERTS)
- (1 - 157-"CHICKENFOOT" ROBERTSON)

19 - New Orleans

- (1 - 157-WHITE KNIGHTS, CONCORDIA PARISH,  
LA.)
- (1 - 157-10666 DEXTER BYRD)
- (1 - 157-10754 (SHOOTING OF BENNY  
SAUNDERS, JR.)
- (1 - 157-10280 (CONCORDIA RIFLE AND  
PISTOL CLUB)

- 1 - 62-3932 (FERRIDAY  
MINUTEMEN)
- 1 - 157-(APWR, CONCORDIA  
PARISH, LA.)
- 1 - 157-(CITIZEN COUNCIL,  
CONCORDIA PARISH, LA.)
- 1 - 157-9775 (VIRGIL GOLSON  
WRIGHT)
- 1 - 157-2604 (POSSIBLE RACIAL  
VIOLENCE, MAJOR URBAN AREA)
- 1 - 157-(REGGIE CARTER)
- 1 - 157-(ERNEST AVANTS)
- 1 - 157-(JOE LEE HARDY)
- 1 - 157-(HOOK SAVILLE)
- 1 - 157-(DALLAS "PETE" ROBERTS)

Block Stamp

157-258-133  
SEARCHED INDEXED  
SERIALIZED FILED  
APR 26 1968  
FBI-JACKSON

COPIES: (continued)

- 1 - 157-~~(DON MULVIHILL)~~
- 1 - 157-("CHICKENFOOT" ROBERTSON)
- 1 - 157-(DENIS "DENNIE" MULVIHILL)
- 1 - 157-(LOUIS VERNARD "BOBBIE" MULVIHILL)
- 1 - 157-(IKE MILLIGAN)

JAP - cst

(30)

B\*

(COVER PAGE)

April 18, 1968

DEXTER BYRD AND THE SHOOTING OF BENNY SAUNDERS, JR.

Mrs. DEXTER BYRD has stated that DEXTER BYRD has an attorney, whom she does not know, representing her husband for the shooting of BENNY SAUNDERS, JR., in Adams County, Mississippi, on April 11, 1968. According to what DEXTER BYRD has told her, this attorney has told DEXTER BYRD to discuss the shooting with no one, even his wife, and that she knows nothing about the incident or what lead up to the incident.

WKKKKOM AT NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI.

The klan group with which BYRD meets at the Glass Kitchen Restuarant in Natchez, Mississippi, is the WKKKKOM. BYRD reportedly is a member of this unit. JOE (LAST NAME UNKNOWN) who is one of the klansmen attending these meetings has not been definitely identified but may be JOE HARDY.

"CHICKENFOOT" ROBERTSON, another klansman attending these meetings, lives in Natchez, Mississippi. HOOK SAVILLE is the WKKKKOM member previously referred to as HOOK SEBILLE. HOOK SAVILLE is separated from his wife, and he is a good friend of JOE HARDY and the MULVIHILL brothers, described below, as is DEXTER BYRD.

DENIS "DENNIE" MULVIHILL, whose wife is FAYE, lives in Vidalia, Louisiana, and works on the Vidalia Fire Department.



His brother is LOUIS VERNARD "BOBBIE" MULVIHILL, who lives at 1615 Camillia Street, Vidalia, Louisiana. "BOBBIE" MULVIHILL is a close friend of ERNEST AVANTS, the Natchez klansman.

FOIA(b) (6)  
FOIA(b) (7) - (C)

DALLAS "PETE" ROBERTS, a member of the WKKKKOM in Natchez, asked "BOBBIE" MULVIHILL to join the WKKKKOM about two years ago. However, "BOBBIE" told ROBERTS that although he hates Negroes he would rather stand on his own two feet and did not need the backing of an organization. Reportedly, these views were held at that time by DENIS MULVIHILL and his cousin, DON MULVIHILL, who lives in the Red River area of Louisiana below Shaw, Louisiana. DON MULVIHILL was supposed to have started work recently at Moran Tank Company in Natchez, Mississippi.

No information has been received indicating any of the MULVIHILLS have changed their mind and joined a klan unit.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT DEXTER BYRD

No information has been received indicating why DEXTER BYRD and "CHICKENFOOT" ROBERTSON were away on the weekend, March 3 - 5, 1968. However, a burning incident reportedly took place in Mississippi during that period.

The WKKKKOM members previously described as visiting BYRD at Vidalia have not been seen since previous reports.

BYRD's wife recently stated that DEXTER BYRD had just bought a rifle for \$240, believed to be a 30-06 caliber weapon. BYRD did this in spite of his wife's protests that things were needed for the house and the children. BYRD is known to frequent the It'll Do Lounge in Natchez, Mississippi, where he meets low-class bar girls and has affairs with them. His current girl is not known. Although informant has no knowledge that BYRD is directly involved in any criminal activity, he is a notorious drunk, brawler, and hater of Negroes.

MINUTEMEN AND CONCORDIA RIFLE AND PISTOL CLUB, FERRIDAY, LOUISIANA.

About one and one-half weeks ago, IKE MILLIGAN,

the Vidalia Fire Chief, who reportedly has considerable military background, was said to have been in contact briefly with VIRGIL COLSON WRIGHT, the leader of the now-inactive Concordia Rifle and Pistol Club. WRIGHT reportedly was non-committal about any current or future plans of that organization, and at no time has MILLIGAN claimed that WRIGHT or any other members have mentioned joining the Minutemen or given MILLIGAN any Minutemen literature. AMERICANS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE WHITE RACE (APWR).

Informant has received no information indicating that the APWR is organizing in Concordia Parish.

CITIZENS COUNCIL

Informant has received no information that the Citizens Council is organizing in Concordia Parish.

F B I

Date: 4/16/68

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via AIRTEL \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-33209)  
FROM: SAC, JACKSON (157-6253) (P)

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS,  
CLAUDE W. FULLER,  
JAMES LLOYD JONES;  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CR - FFA

Re Jackson airtel to Bureau 4/4/68.

Enclosed herewith are four copies of an LHM  
which is self-explanatory. One copy is being furnished  
the USA, Jackson, Miss.

The Special Agent referred to in the enclosed  
LHM is SA GEORGE P. GAMBLIN.

3 - Bureau (Enc. 4) (RM)  
5 - Jackson (2- 157-6253)  
    ✓ (1- 157-958)  
    (1- 157-796)  
    (1- 157-6254)

GPG/bdb  
(8) *ebh*

157-958-131

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Jackson, Mississippi

April 16, 1968

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS,  
CLAUDE W. FULLER,  
JAMES LLOYD JONES;  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CIVIL RIGHTS - FEDERAL FIREARMS  
ACT

On April 16, 1968, Edwin E. Benoist, Jr., County Attorney, Adams County, Natchez, Mississippi, advised a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that trial of James Lloyd Jones as an accessory after the fact in the murder of Ben Chester White, scheduled to commence today in the Circuit Court at Natchez, Mississippi, has been postponed until the June term, 1968.

Mr. Benoist stated Jones is represented by Attorney Everette Truly of Natchez, Mississippi, and believes Jones will enter a plea of guilty in the June term of court.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

4 - Bureau  
1 - USA, Jackson  
5 - Jackson (2- 157-6253)  
    (1- 157-958)  
    (1- 157-796)  
    (1- 157-6254)

GPG/bdb  
(10) *edh*

157-958-130

Searched	_____
Serialized	_____ <i>edh</i>
Indexed	_____ <i>edh</i>
Filed	_____

SAC, JACKSON

4/15/68

SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-9654) (C)

JOE LEE HARDY  
RM (KLAN)

Enclosed herewith for the information of Jackson are four copies of an FD 302 containing information of interest to Jackson about the subject, ERNEST AVANTS and violence in the Vidalia - Natchez, Louisiana, area.

4 - Jackson (1: 157- JOE LEE HARDY      Encs. 4)  
①: 157- ERNEST AVANTS  
1: 157- Klan Activities, Adams County  
1: 44-2044 (WHARBOM))

1 - New Orleans  
MDD/emh  
(5)

157-958-129

SEARCHED	JH	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	44	FILED
APR 16 1968		
FBI - JACKSON		

M. O'Neill

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/10/68

FOIA (b) (6)

FOIA (b) (7) - (C)

1

JOAN MULVIHILL, wife of LEWIS BERNARD "Bobby" MULVIHILL, resides at 1615 Camilla Street, Vidalia, Louisiana. She volunteered the following information:

[redacted] He is not believed to have joined the Ku Klux Klan, although he was asked to join by DALLAS "Pete" ROBERTS about two years ago. He did not join and stated that he did not want to depend on any Klansmen to back him up; he would rather depend on himself. Mrs. MULVIHILL identified "Pete" ROBERTS as the brother of HENRY BUSH ROBERTS, her ex-husband.

[redacted]

Her husband is a close friend of JOE HARDY, who is well known by people in Vidalia, as a Klansman. Her husband and HARDY frequently go hunting at night. She recalled that she heard her husband tell HARDY to meet him at the Chef Restaurant that night, February 24, 1968, and go hunting. About 11:00 P.M., she noted that HARDY's 1956 blue and white Oldsmobile was parked near Cater's Garage and the Clef Restaurant. Her husband's 1968 black Chevrolet pickup was gone. He did not return until after 11:00 P.M. Sunday night, February 25, 1968. He did not have any meat or other tangible proof that he had been hunting.

Mrs. MULVIHILL further advised that her husband is employed at the International Paper Company, Natchez, Mississippi. He works with ERNEST AVANTS, who has a reputation for violence and Klan activity.

She described her husband as follows:

Born [redacted]

On 3/29/68 at Vidalia, Louisiana

by MERRIMAN D. DIVEN /

njc

152-958-128

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 16 1968	
Date dictated 4/4/68	

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

NO 157-3255

2

Race  
Sex  
Height  
Weight  
Eyes  
Hair  
Education  
Military Service  
Marital Status

White  
Male  
Five feet, eight inches  
145 pounds  
Hazel-  
Gray - balding  
High school graduate  
US Navy, World War II,  
Honorable discharge

FOIA (b) (6) \_\_\_\_\_  
FOIA (b) (7) - (C)

Arrests  
Weapons

None  
Shot guns, 16 gauge and 14 gauge,  
30.30 rifle; .22 caliber rifle with  
scope; .22 caliber pistol;  
"Centennial" Winchester.



FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Date prepared

Date received

4/9/68

Received from (name or symbol number)

Received by

SA JAMES A. WOOTEN  
SA JOSEPH G. PEGGS

Method of delivery (check appropriate blocks)

☒ in person ☐ by telephone ☐ by mail ☐ orally ☐ recording device ☐ written by Informant

If orally furnished and reduced to writing by Agent:

Date

Dictated RD 4/10/68 to cjm

Transcribed 4/11/68

Authenticated  
by Informant

Date of Report

4/9/68

Date(s) of activity

4/2/68-4/9/68

Brief description of activity or material

Conversations of SDG members R. J. GLOVER, E. D. MORACE, and JAMES SCAROBROUGH set forth. GLOVER still thinks TOMMIE JONES is FBI Informant. [redacted] stated ERNEST AVANTS has extra money and has sold out to the FBI.

File where original is located if not attached

Remarks:

INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT MUST BE PROPERLY PARAPHRASED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THE INFORMANT.

7-JACKSON 1-(157-5206 SDG) (RM)  
1-(157-7444 R. J. GLOVER)  
1-(157-7479 JAMES SCAROBROUGH)  
1-(157- ERNEST AVANTS)  
1-(157-7543 E. D. MORACE)  
1-(157- [redacted])  
1-(157- JAMES "BILL" BLANEY)

8-NEW ORLEANS 1-[redacted]  
1-(157-6542 SDG)  
1-(157-3489 E. D. MORACE)  
1-(157-6008 BILL BLANEY)  
1-(157-3788 JAMES SCAROBROUGH)  
1-(157- WAYNE REED)  
1-(157- UNSUB, MARTIN (157-10473)  
LUTHER KING - VICTIM)

JAW:cjm  
(15)

157-958-127

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 15 1968	
FBI - JACKSON	

*Jack Davis*  
*Rafis Miss*  
*M. O'Neil*

April 9, 1968  
Alexandria, Louisiana

SILVER DOLLAR GROUP

R. J. GLOVER visited E. D. MORACE late on April 2, 1968, and asked MORACE if he had found a container for burying explosives yet. MORACE said he had a sheet metal man working on it. GLOVER was talking about TOMMIE LEE JONES and said he is sure JONES is an FBI informant and he is watching JONES, but does not want JONES to know it. GLOVER said someone had recently told him some more information about JONES being an informant. GLOVER recalled the time that JONES claimed his wife received a telephone call saying GLOVER and JAMES LEE were going to kill him. It was GLOVER's opinion that JONES was making that up just to throw them off.

GLOVER talked of the Negro situation and said there is sure to be riots all summer they must be ready to fight the Negroes. GLOVER said that some evening soon he wants E. D. MORACE and two other men to drive to Roxie, Mississippi and talk to JACK DAVIS, the barber there who helped GLOVER and DON WILKINSON when they had car trouble. GLOVER wants MORACE to express appreciation to DAVIS for this help. GLOVER was driving the pickup truck belonging to JACK SEALE.

GLOVER requested MORACE to ask JAMES SCAROBROUGH the next time he sees SCAROBROUGH about the meeting SCAROBROUGH and a group of men had two Sundays before and why MORACE and GLOVER were not invited.

JAMES SCAROBROUGH and E. D. MORACE talked on April 6, 1968, and MORACE asked SCAROBROUGH about a meeting he and some men attended two Sundays before. SCAROBROUGH said that was just the Concordia Parish Rifle Association. MORACE was later heard to remark that the meeting had to do with the Minutemen; he felt sure. SCAROBROUGH was getting ready for the Negro revolution which he feels sure is coming soon. His wife had just purchased a case of soup and a case of canned beans for him to stock the hunting camp on the levee near Ferriday, Louisiana.

MORACE stated that if the revolution was coming he needed a better weapon and that he found three men to go in with him to buy one of the machine guns SCAROBROUGH knew about. SCAROBROUGH said he had talked to the man recently and the price of a machine gun had gone up to \$165.00. MORACE asked SCAROBROUGH to see about getting him one.

SCAROBROUGH gave MORACE a stack of klan posters which he wanted put up on the highway near Ferriday, Louisiana, the night of April 10, 1968.

BILL BLANEY, WAYNE REED, [REDACTED], and E. D. MORACE met at the King Hotel, and the Bonanza Club at Ferriday, Louisiana, on the night of April 6, 1968. REED and BLANEY were intoxicated. REED asked MORACE if he would help [REDACTED] out. [REDACTED] then stated he feels sure ERNEST AVANTS has sold out to the FBI, like TOMMIE JONES. [REDACTED] said that AVANTS has moved to a new house and got new furniture like JONES. [REDACTED] said that if AVANTS talks it will send him, [REDACTED] to the electric chair. [REDACTED] said he wanted to know that if AVANTS talks that someone will take care of him. MORACE stated he would take care of AVANTS if AVANTS testifies against [REDACTED] and sends him to the electric chair. [REDACTED] did not say what crime he and AVANTS had committed.

UNSUB, MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

Source has no information on who shot MARTIN LUTHER KING.

Director  
 United States Secret Service  
 Department of the Treasury  
 Washington, D. C. 20220

April 1, 1968

Dear Sir:

The information furnished herewith concerns an individual who is believed to be covered by the agreement between the FBI and Secret Service concerning Presidential protection, and to fall within the category or categories checked.

1. ☐ Has attempted or threatened bodily harm to any government official or employee, including foreign government officials residing in or planning an imminent visit to the U. S., because of his official status.
2. ☐ Has attempted or threatened to redress a grievance against any public official by other than legal means.
3. ☐ Because of background is potentially dangerous; or has been identified as member or participant in communist movement; or has been under active investigation as member of other group or organization inimical to U. S.
4. ☐ U. S. citizens or residents who defect from the U. S. to countries in the Soviet or Chinese Communist blocs and return.
5. ☒ Subversives, ultrarightists, racists and fascists who meet one or more of the following criteria:
  - (a) ☐ Evidence of emotional instability (including unstable residence and employment record) or irrational or suicidal behavior;
  - (b) ☐ Expressions of strong or violent anti-U. S. sentiment;
  - (c) ☒ Prior acts (including arrests or convictions) or conduct or statements indicating a propensity for violence and antipathy toward good order and government.
6. ☐ Individuals involved in illegal bombing or illegal bomb-making.

Photograph ☐ has been furnished ☐ enclosed ☐ is not available  
☐ may be available through \_\_\_\_\_

Very truly yours,

*J. Edgar Hoover*  
 John Edgar Hoover  
 Director

2-Bureau  
 1-Special Agent in Charge (Enclosure(s))

U. S. Secret Service JACKSON  
 (1-Jackson (157-958))

MJO/jrs (4)  
 Enclosure(s)

(Upon removal of classified enclosures, if any, this transmittal form becomes UNCLASSIFIED.)

157-958-126  
 Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
 Serialized 207  
 Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Filed LM

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Reporting Office <b>JACKSON</b>	Office of Origin <b>JACKSON</b>	Date <b>4/1/68</b>	Investigative Period <b>7/20/65 - 3/15/68</b>
Title of Case  <b>ERNEST HENRY AVANTS</b>		Report made by <b>SA MICHAEL J. O'NEILL</b>	Typed By: <b>jrs</b>
		Character of Case  <b>RM (KLAN)</b>	

## SUMMARY

### NON-PROSECUTIVE SUPPLEMENTAL SUMMARY REPORT

#### REFERENCES:

Report of SA CLARENCE G. PROSPERE dated 7/19/65.

P\*

#### LEAD:

JACKSON

AT NATCHEZ, MISS.

Will follow activities of subject.

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

#### INFORMANTS:

Identity	Dates of Contact	Location
JN T-1 is [redacted]	7/20/65	[redacted] JN 157-958-39
JN T-2 is [redacted]	9/3, 4, 5/65	
	9/26/65	
	6/20/66	
	7/11/66	

Approved 	Special Agent in Charge	Do not write in spaces below		
Copies made:  8-Bureau (157-3701) (RM) 1-Secret Service, Jackson (RM) 1-NISO-CHASN (RM) 1-OSI, Barksdale AFB, La. (RM) 2-MIGp. Ft. McPherson, Ga. (RM) 3-Jackson (157-958)		157	958	125
		Searched _____ Serialized <u>W7</u> Indexed _____ Filed <u>AKM</u>		
Notations:				

JN 157-958

<u>Identity</u>	<u>Dates of Contact</u>	<u>Location</u>
	9/19/66 10/19/66 1/10/67	
JN T-3 is [REDACTED]	9/3/65 7/8/66 7/22/66 2/21/68	
JN T-4 is [REDACTED]	6/16, 18/66 9/26/66 11/20/66 12/16/66 3/31/67 5/16/67	
JN T-5 is [REDACTED]	6/15, 16, 18/66 12/16/66 3/3/67 3/31/67	
JN T-6 is [REDACTED]	12/11/67	
JN T-7 is [REDACTED]	4/13/67 8/27/67	
JN T-8 is [REDACTED]	10/28/66	
JN T-9 is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	11/1/66	
JN T-10 is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	3/14/67 10/25/67 11/22/67	
JN T-11 is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	3/17/67 4/10/67 6/27/67 9/16/67	

JN 157-958

B  
(COVER PAGE)

JN 157-958

<u>Identity</u>	<u>Dates of Contact</u>	<u>Location</u>
	11/13/67	
	12/7/67	
JN T-12 is [REDACTED]	4/7/67	
	4/20/67	
	4/26/67	
	5/10/67	
	5/25/67	
	6/17, 21/67	
	6/27/67	
	9/5/67	
	12/20/67	
	12/29/67, 1/3/68	
JN T-13 is [REDACTED]	3/15/68	
[REDACTED]	3/29/67	
JN T-14 is [REDACTED]	8/8/67	
	12/13/67	

ADMINISTRATIVE:

A copy of this report is being forwarded to OSI due to the mental instability of AVANTS and in view of the violent nature of this individual.

C\*  
(COVER PAGE)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to: 1-Secret Service, Jackson, Mississippi (RM)  
1-NISO-CHASN (RM)  
1-OSI, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana (RM)  
2-MIGp, Ft. McPherson, Georgia (RM)

Report of: SA MICHAEL J. O'NEILL                      Office: JACKSON  
Date: APRIL 1, 1968

Field Office File #: JN 157-958                      Bureau File #: 157-3701

Title: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS

Character: RACIAL MATTERS (KLAN)

## Synopsis:

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS presently resides at 114 Hammett St. in Natchez, Miss. He is employed at the International Paper Co., Natchez, Miss., where he has been employed since 1950. AVANTS was implicated along with CLAUDE FULLER and JAMES LLOYD JONES in the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE which occurred on 6/12/66. AVANTS was subsequently acquitted of this charge. When AVANTS was interviewed by Bureau Agents on 3/13/67, he admitted shooting WHITE but stated he was only shooting at a corpse. Sources recently advised that all Klan groups are ignoring AVANTS due to the fact that they believe AVANTS had turned state's evidence in the murder trial of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Sources have further advised that Klan members would not trust AVANTS in any organization due to his alcoholic tendencies and due to the fact that when drunk AVANTS reportedly talks too much. On further interviews with AVANTS he reported to Bureau Agents that real enemies were not the Negroes, but the "big shot" politicians. AVANTS on several interviews has stated he would be willing to furnish information to the FBI.

- P\* -

DETAILS:

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

I. BACKGROUND

A. True Name and Aliases

True Name--ERNEST HENRY AVANTS  
Aliases----None

B. Residence

114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Mississippi.

C. Employment

International Paper Company, Natchez, Mississippi.

D. Automobile

No information available at this time concerning AVANTS' vehicle.

E. Weapons

When interviewed by SA's JOHN DENNIS MILLER and BENJAMIN F. GRAVES on September 6, 1967, ERNEST AVANTS exhibited to Agents a .44 magnum with 7½-inch barrel, which AVANTS states he has for his wife in order that she might protect herself.

II. CURRENT POSITION IN ORGANIZATION

According to sources AVANTS has been excluded from all Klan organizations, primarily due to the fact that the Klan feels AVANTS talks too much.

III. SUMMARY OF PAST ACTIVITIES

On July 20, 1965, JN T-1 reported that ERNEST AVANTS attended a fish fry at the home of JAMES LEE on June 26, 1965. He stated that along with AVANTS there were a number of known Klan members present at this fish fry.

On September 5, 1965, JN T-2 reported that ERNEST AVANTS is suspected of being used as a source of information by Agents of the FBI.

On September 3, 1965, JN T-3 stated that ERNEST AVANTS was kicked out of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi (WKKKKOM) immediately following his arrest by the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol (MHSP) in November or December, 1964. Source stated that it was the opinion of the Klansmen that AVANTS when arrested was talking too much.

On September 26, 1965, JN T-2 advised that ERNEST AVANTS was recently arrested in Jonesville, Louisiana, after he broke into the home belonging to the mayor of that city. Source indicated that Klan organizations in Jonesville are tired of AVANTS coming to that city and causing trouble and have indicated that if he does not stop these activities he will be dealt with in a severe manner.

On June 20, 1966, JN T-2 reported that ERNEST H. AVANTS was seen approximately two weeks ago at "TINY" LEWIS' Barbeque Drive-In under the influence of alcohol. Source stated AVANTS was bragging to some of the Klansmen there that he had been in on the killing of a Negro at a shoe shop in Ferriday, Louisiana. AVANTS also was bragging that he had been in on the killing of two Negroes whose bodies were found floating in the old Mississippi River near Ernest Parker's Island about two years ago. Source stated that AVANTS is prone to lie while under the influence of alcohol. Source advised that arrangements had been made during the past few days at "TINY" LEWIS' Barbeque Drive-In near Natchez to establish an alibi for ERNEST HENRY AVANTS on the day that BEN CHESTER WHITE was murdered.

JN T-4 on June 18, 1966, stated that on this date he attended the preliminary hearing on the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder and that in the source's opinion JONES was telling the truth about FULLER and AVANTS' participation in the murder of WHITE.

JN T-5 on June 18, 1966, stated that AVANTS was never a member of the United Klans of America (UKA). Source stated that in the past AVANTS was a member of the WKKKKOM. However, the source at this time does not know AVANTS' status.

JN T-2 on July 11, 1966, advised that ERNEST AVANTS had made several trips via chartered airplane to Laurel, Mississippi, where source believes AVANTS contacted SAM BOWERS. Source pointed out these trips were in late February or early March, just following the return of AVANTS and other Klansmen from the House Committee of Un-American Activity hearings in Washington. Source stated during these trips AVANTS was in contact with DEAVOURS NIX.

JN T-3 on July 8, 1966, advised that SAM BOWERS and ERNEST HENRY AVANTS had been seeing a lot of each other. Source stated he had determined AVANTS had been renting an airplane and going to Laurel, Mississippi. Source also stated that he determined that SAM BOWERS had come to Natchez in an effort to see ERNEST AVANTS a day or two after AVANTS was arrested by the Adams County Sheriff's Office. This arrest was in connection with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source stated he feels BOWERS was instrumental in getting AVANTS to kill BEN CHESTER WHITE.

On July 22, 1966, JN T-3 advised that the WKKKKOM is now attempting to raise money for the families of CLAUDE FULLER and ERNEST AVANTS.

JN T-4 on September 26, 1966, advised that a collection was made at the Armstrong Tire and Rubber Company in Natchez for the families of ERNEST AVANTS and CLAUDE FULLER.

On September 19, 1966, JN T-2 advised that he had recently seen ROBERT WILSON, known Klansman, who stated he, WILSON, had secured approximately \$300 which he would bring to Natchez to be used in the AVANTS-FULLER case.

JN T-8 on October 28, 1966, advised that SAM BOWERS took the wife of ERNEST HENRY AVANTS to see ELMORE D. GREAVES. The purpose of this visit was to determine if GREAVES would give AVANTS money for legal defense in connection with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE.

JN T-2 on October 19, 1966, advised that SAM BOWERS and CHARLES BLACKWELL had been in Natchez, Mississippi, several times during the recent past with regard to the ERNEST AVANTS-CLAUDE FULLER case. He advised that BOWERS met with the wife of ERNEST AVANTS regarding assistance in this case. He stated BOWERS had mentioned that they will try to assist AVANTS but will not be able to give much money at the present time. Source advised that he had learned that GLADYS AVANTS had recently gone to Laurel, Mississippi, where she met with SAM BOWERS and was given approximately \$200 to assist in obtaining legal counsel for ERNEST AVANTS.

JN T-9 on November 1, 1966, advised that leaders of the WKKKKOM in the Natchez, Mississippi, area believe that the only successful way to defend AVANTS and FULLER in Natchez in their pending murder trial involving their alleged murder of a Negro is to do the following; (1) get as many secret members of the Klan placed on the jury as possible. (2) when Sheriff ODELL ANDERS is put on the stand he should be asked if he swore the Klan oath and still abides by it in order to discredit his veracity, because ANDERS previously had joined the Klan for political reasons. (3) get a white woman still not identified who will testify that the victim had raped her.

JN T-4 on November 20, 1966, advised that R. P. CARTER indicated he had seen the list of prospective jurors in the Natchez Democrat and that they had six or seven good men on the list. Source stated the "good men" referred to Klansmen.

On December 16, 1966, JN T-5 advised AVANTS was released from the Adams County Jail on December 16, 1966. This was in connection with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source did not know the identity of the individuals who put up the bail for AVANTS.

On December 16, 1966, JN T-4 advised that he attended a scheduled meeting of Klavern 800, UKA, Natchez. This meeting was on December 16, 1966, and at the meeting a report was made that the Klan raised \$600 raffling a set of Armstrong tires in efforts to raise

funds for legal fees for FULLER, AVANTS and JONES in the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder case.

On January 10, 1967, JN T-2 advised that when ERNEST AVANTS was released from jail on December 16, 1966, he went to the Barbeque Pit and began telling everyone that the source was an informant of the FBI.

JN T-5 on March 3, 1967, advised that as far as he knew ERNEST AVANTS was not a member of the Silver Dollar Group.

On March 14, 1967, JN T-10 advised that there was talk that FULLER and AVANTS could "beat the rap" in the murder trial of BEN CHESTER WHITE.

JN T-11 on March 17, 1967, advised that AVANTS was a member of the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi, and the United Klans of America, but was not mentioned as being a member of the Silver Dollar Group.

On March 31, 1967, JN T-5 advised that when AVANTS gets drunk on beer he will do most anything.

JN T-4 on March 31, 1967, advised that JEWEL BURT is used on the committee to obtain funds in behalf of AVANTS in the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder case.

JN T-12 on April 7, 1967, advised that AVANTS told him a new group of CLAUDE FULLER's was to be known as the Cottonmouth Moccasin group and that AVANTS had created the name. Source stated the following persons are associated with this group; CLAUDE FULLER, ERNEST AVANTS, JAMES JACKSON.

On April 10, 1967, JN T-11 advised that he was well acquainted with ERNEST AVANTS.

On April 13, 1967, JN T-7 advised that ERNEST AVANTS was in the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, WKKKKOM and had heard he was to be tried for murder in Natchez.

On March 29, 1967, JN T-13 advised he was unable to identify ERNEST HENRY AVANTS as being a member of the Silver Dollar Group.

On April 20, 1967, JN T-12 advised that AVANTS met RED GLOVER for the first time at "TINY" LEWIS' Barbeque Pit, Natchez, and was questioned by GLOVER about the JONES' murder trial.

On April 26, 1967, JN T-12 advised that [ ] had told him that he had been on several "jobs" with AVANTS.

On May 16, 1967, JN T-4 tentatively identified ERNEST AVANTS as a member of the Silver Dollar Group.

On May 10, 1967, JN T-12 advised that a committee composed of CHARLES DAVIDSON, REGGIE CARTER and JOE HARDY is going to contact ERNEST AVANTS to warn him from continuing to run off at the mouth. Source stated JOE HARDY wants to whip him but DAVIDSON is against violence of any kind at this time.

JN T-12 on May 25, 1967, advised WAYNE REED advised him on May 17, 1967, that ERNEST AVANTS had been "shut up" and that no one was to have anything more to do with him, AVANTS.

JN T-12 on June 21, 1967, advised that TRAVIS BUCKLEY, Attorney from Laurel, Mississippi, who is representing the White Knights was at the Barbeque Pit and was talking to ERNEST AVANTS most of the time.

On June 27, 1967, JN T-12 advised that TRAVIS BUCKLEY is going to defend the White Knights in a million dollar civil suit brought against them by the heirs of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source stated AVANTS was at the Barbeque Pit with BUCKLEY on June 23, 1967, and that AVANTS was in a drunken condition. Source advised AVANTS was arguing with BUCKLEY.

JN T-11 on June 27, 1967, advised that SAM BOWERS spent a day with AVANTS last week and that they merely conversed on the internal situation of the United States today. Source reported that in his contact

JN 157-958

with AVANTS he had learned nothing about the disposal of the guns used in the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder.

JN T-14 on August 8, 1967, advised that Klansmen in the Natchez area are angry with ERNEST AVANTS because of his alleged confessions to the FBI in the Adams County Sheriff's Office concerning AVANTS' participation in the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE.

On August 27, 1967, JN T-7 advised that he only knew ERNEST HENRY AVANTS to see him.

On September 5, 1967, JN T-12 advised AVANTS was a member of the Old Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi.

On September 16, 1967, JN T-11 advised that the WKKKKOM terminated their use of a \$4,000 building on the property of SELF HANEY, Morgantown Heights Road, just outside of Natchez, Mississippi, because ERNEST AVANTS got drunk one night and went out and shot up the building.

On October 25, 1967, JN T-10 advised that ERNEST AVANTS became very upset with ED FULLER when he and FULLER got into an argument about SAM BOWERS coming in to Natchez, Mississippi.

On November 13, 1967, JN T-11 advised that he has heard that AVANTS contacted the Adams County District Attorney during the past couple of weeks and supposedly gave the District Attorney some information about the BEN CHESTER WHITE murder case.

On November 22, 1967, JN T-10 advised that TRAVIS BUCKLEY, Attorney for the White Knights, was seen taking the wife of ERNEST AVANTS to dinner at Jughead's on the old river at Deer Park, Louisiana.

JN T-11 on December 7, 1967, advised that a jury was selected on December 7, 1967, for the trial of ERNEST HENRY AVANTS in Natchez, Mississippi. Source stated there are four Klansmen or former Klansmen on this jury.



On December 11, 1967, JN T-6 advised he had obtained a list of the jury members in AVANTS' murder trial.

On December 13, 1967, JN T-14 advised that when AVANTS was first arrested in the Spring of 1967 AVANTS had obtained money for his defense from the Klan. Source also advised that AVANTS' wife had in her possession a Lueger which SAM BLACKMAN was trying to obtain from AVANTS' wife.

JN T-12 on December 20, 1967, advised that JAMES LEE SCAROBOROUGH appears quite concerned over the acquittal of ERNEST HENRY AVANTS in his recent trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. SCAROBOROUGH stated that in his opinion the "Feds" had "thrown" the case in order that AVANTS would turn state's evidence and testify against CLAUDE FULLER in FULLER's trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE.

JN T-12 on January 3, 1968, advised that Klansmen feel AVANTS will testify against CLAUDE FULLER in FULLER's upcoming trial for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. Source continued that most Klansmen will reserve opinion on AVANTS until after the FULLER trial. Source stated that the tickets which JEWEL LEE BURT was selling were for the legal defense of ERNEST HENRY AVANTS in AVANTS' trial for the murder of WHITE. Efforts on AVANTS' behalf met with little success.

On February 21, 1968, JN T-3 advised AVANTS was a member of all Klan groups with the exception of the UKA.

On March 15, 1968, JN T-12 reported that ERNEST AVANTS has JAMES LEE SCAROBOROUGH worried because AVANTS talked SCAROBOROUGH into doing something that could put him, SCAROBOROUGH, in the penitentiary for conspiracy.

#### IV. INTERVIEWS WITH THE SUBJECT

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 3/13/67

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS was interviewed in connection with another investigative matter on the front porch of his residence located at 114 Rushing Street, Natchez. He was advised of the identity of interviewing Agents by SA ROBERT F. BOYLE. He was advised by SA BOYLE that he did not have to furnish any statement or information to the interviewing Agents, and that any information or statement furnished by him could be used against him in a court of law. AVANTS was also advised by SA BOYLE that he had a right to consult an attorney of his own choosing at any time he desired, and that he had the right to terminate the interview at any time he desired. AVANTS stated he is being represented by an attorney on state charges and that he is well aware of his rights and does not desire to have his attorney present during this interview.

During this interview the interviewing Agents discussed with AVANTS the numerous shootings and beatings that have occurred in the Adams County, Mississippi, area in the past several years, including the murder of BEN WHITE.

SA BOYLE inquired of AVANTS as to when his trial in connection with the BEN WHITE murder case was scheduled for court. AVANTS replied that he has been unable to get a speedy trial as guaranteed him under the constitution of the United States as the District Attorney kept getting delays. He stated he was ready to go to trial today.

AVANTS stated he felt confident that he would be acquitted of the murder charge as the sheriff has only one witness against him and it was his word against this one witness. AVANTS then corrected his remarks, stating it is the "word of only one witness against two of them." He stated that the only witness against him "is out of his mind," and was taken to Whitfield last Friday or was to be taken today, March 13, 1967.

AVANTS further advised he was not guilty of murdering WHITE and he explained in detail that FULLER shot WHITE five or six

157-6253

44-2044

157-958

On 3/13/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File # 157-1519 (Adams Co. UKA)

SA ALLAN N. KORNBLUM

-9a-

by SA ROBERT F. BOYLE/raj

Date dictated 3/13/67

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times in the heart, then paused for one minute. FULLER then shot WHITE several times in the head, paused for another minute and then shot WHITE in each arm. AVANTS stated that FULLER then turned to him, AVANTS, and requested AVANTS to shoot WHITE. AVANTS stated he asked FULLER, "Where should I shoot him?" FULLER replied, "shoot him in the God damn head," which AVANTS did.

AVANTS stated that he has been advised by his attorney that he, AVANTS, could not be convicted of murder because all he did was shoot a corpse. It was pointed out to AVANTS that WHITE might not have been dead when AVANTS shot him to which AVANTS replied "he had to be dead because of the number of shots fired into him by FULLER."

AVANTS did not volunteer any information regarding where this shooting occurred or any further details concerning the shooting.

AVANTS again stated he was ready for trial any time and that any delay is being caused by the District Attorney.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 3/14/67

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS was interviewed on the front porch of his residence located at 114 Rushing. AVANTS was advised of the identity of the interviewing Agents and the nature of the inquiry by SA ROBERT F. BOYLE. SA BOYLE advised AVANTS that he did not need to make any statement or furnish any information, and that any statement or information furnished by him could be used against him in a court of law. He was also advised by SA BOYLE he had the right to consult with an attorney or anyone else before furnishing a statement. AVANTS advised that he knows his rights and he is presently represented by an attorney in a state matter currently pending; however, he did not desire for that attorney to be present during the interview.

AVANTS stated he does not have possession of any information concerning the murder of a Negro by the name of WHARLEST JACKSON and that if he did possess any information concerning this matter he would not furnish it to the FBI. He stated, in his opinion, JACKSON was killed by another Negro to create an incident wherein the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People could raise funds as a result of national publicity attached to that type of crime.

AVANTS stated that he is not a member of any klan type organization nor has he ever been a member of such an organization. He stated he is a segregationist and definitely believes in most aims and projects of the Ku Klux Klan.

AVANTS said that in the event he receives any information in the future concerning the identity of the individual responsible for JACKSON's death he would not furnish this information to the FBI unless the individual responsible was a Negro. He stated that if he determines that a white man killed JACKSON he, AVANTS, would shake his hand and congratulate him.

AVANTS stated he does not believe in integration of the ~~school system, restaurants, theaters, etc.~~, and he definitely does not believe in mixing the blood of the whites and "niggers."

JN 44-2044

JN 157-958

JN 157-1519

On 3/13/67 at Natchez, Mississippi

File #

SA ALLAN N. KORNBLUM

SA ROBERT F. BOYLE/raj

3/13/67

by \_\_\_\_\_ -9c- Date dictated \_\_\_\_\_

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2

AVANTS stated he would not stand for any "nigger" to come into his school, church, or home and that he would use violence if necessary to prevent such a happening.

AVANTS stated that he thought it was fruitless to burn any Negro churches, but rather they should burn them when they were full of "niggers" as this was the only time it would do any good.

AVANTS further advised that he thought it was stupid to kill a "nigger" when the real enemies are the big shot politicians, both white and Negro, and that the present Governor of Mississippi was an enemy of the white people.

Although AVANTS stated he was not a member of the Ku Klux Klan or any klan-type group, he did state that he had taken several secret oaths, but declined to identify the organizations or reasons for which these oaths were taken. AVANTS did state, however, in this connection that he was a member of the Masons.

AVANTS stated that he believed the Negro civil rights movement was Communist inspired, and that he had participated in the erection of large billboards in the Natchez area on which photographs reportedly depicting MARTIN LUTHER KING in a Communist training course were displayed. AVANTS also stated it is his belief that CHARLES EVERS was killed at the direction of CHARLES EVERS because of some irregularities in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People funds on the part of JACKSON.

AVANTS stated that he was generally familiar with the use of dynamite in that he had used it many years ago when he was farming to blow out tree stumps, but he had not handled dynamite in many years and would be reluctant to do so because it was extremely dangerous. AVANTS stated while he was in the Army he had learned to use the "C3" plastic explosive and that this had been subsequently improved upon as "C4" in recent years. AVANTS denied any knowledge regarding the death of CHARLES EVERS.

It is noted the above interview was conducted on AVANTS' front porch, and that the relationship between interviewing Agents and AVANTS was friendly and cordial through the interview.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/21/67

ERNEST AVANTS was interviewed at his residence, 114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Mississippi, by Special Agents EARL E. BOYD and JOHN DENNIS MILLER who identified themselves as Special Agents of the FBI. SA MILLER advised AVANTS of the nature of the investigation and began to explain to AVANTS his constitutional rights. AVANTS interrupted and stated he had been interviewed many times by the FBI, was fully aware of his rights, and would gladly talk with the Agents, but did not desire to sign a waiver of rights form.

AVANTS advised that approximately six months ago he had a .22 caliber rifle stolen from his house. He theorized the thief must have had a key to the house as no windows or doors bore evidence of forceable entry. In AVANTS' opinion a Klansman might have stolen the rifle. He explained that it was possible that some members of the Klan did not want him in Natchez any longer. He would not elaborate on this point. He continued that if this rifle was left at the scene of a murder, he could be convicted and put in jail. This theft has not been reported to the Adams County Sheriff's Office.

He continued that the Klan is not assisting financially with his defense in the trial which concerns the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. He did state that some Klansmen came to his wife while he was in jail and informed her that the Klan would assist him financially if he would agree to use the Klan lawyer. This he refused to do. AVANTS did not desire to furnish any names of individuals involved.

He inquired as to the whereabouts of the Special Agent who had visited him previously, explaining that he

On 8/18/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File # Jackson 44-2044  
SAs EARL E. BOYD and Jackson 157-958  
JOHN DENNIS MILLER /JDM/jls -9e- Jackson 157-1519  
Jackson 6253  
Jackson 157-MARVIN MC KINNEY  
Jackson 44-488  
 Date dictated 8/19/67

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desired to ascertain why that Agent thought he, AVANTS, had attended a fishfry in Wildsville, Louisiana. AVANTS denied he had attended any such fishfry.

When asked about the shooting of a Negro named BUTLER in Mississippi, AVANTS stated he was familiar with the case and knew the identities of most of the individuals responsible, but did not desire to comment any further on the matter.

He advised that he knows MARVIN MC KINNEY and his brother, "BIG MAC" MC KINNEY, and has no opinion one way or the other about the two men. AVANTS advised that he did not desire to furnish any information to the FBI because as soon as he told something to the FBI, it would be spread all over town. Furthermore, AVANTS stated he has nothing to gain and everything to loose furnishing information to the FBI.

AVANTS is certain that the Negroes killed WHARLEST JACKSON because it is relatively easy to look back on the murder and observe which race gained most from it.

AVANTS advised that he became incensed at CHARLES EVERS when EVERS announced that AVANTS had received a raise and a promotion at International Paper Company after he had been released from jail. This untrue statement by EVERS served to confirm AVANTS' opinion that Negroes in general and Negro leaders in particular are basically dishonest and untrustworthy. He advised that he does not hate Negroes, but that he did not feel as though he would feel any remorse if all Negroes suddenly disappeared. AVANTS concluded by stating that he had no objection to additional contacts by the FBI.

Date 9/9/67

ERNEST AVANTS was interviewed at his residence, 114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Mississippi, by SAs BENJAMIN F. GRAVES and JOHN DENNIS MILLER who identified themselves as Special Agents of the FBI. AVANTS advised he was aware of his constitutional rights, but would be more than willing to talk with the Agents.

He was interviewed for approximately three hours during which time various topics of conversation were discussed. Throughout the interview, AVANTS continually shifted from one topic to another in such a manner that it was often difficult or impossible to comprehend the subject matter of his remarks.

Several times he indicated a willingness to trade information in his possession. He was unwilling and unable, however, to specify what he wanted in return or about what subjects he would be willing to furnish information.

In this regard, he advised that he could furnish no information about the bombing of WHARLEST JACKSON. He did state that he could be of assistance to the FBI in the investigation of the GEORGE METCALFE bombing because "we" (evidently referring to the White Knights) have had some fairly strong opinions concerning that bombing.

Three times AVANTS was asked about a trip to Brookhaven, Mississippi, with TOMMIE LEE JONES to secure medical assistance for JONES following a shooting on the property of a Negro pheasant breeder in Louisiana. SA GRAVES explained to AVANTS that he was not suspected of participating in the trip to Louisiana as Silver Dollar Group members were involved and he was not a Silver Dollar Group member. AVANTS volunteered that some of those involved were subsequently in

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Jackson 44-2044

Jackson 157-958

Jackson 157-3830

Jackson 157-5206

Jackson 174-27

On 9/6/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File #  
by SAs JOHN DENNIS MILLER and BENJAMIN F. GRAVES /JDM:jls -9g- Date dictated 9/7/67

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the Silver Dollar Group, but that the Silver Dollar Group was not in existence at the time of this incident. AVANTS did not comment on his trip with JONES to Brookhaven.

AVANTS displayed acute interest in the murder of EARL HODGES in Eddiceton, Mississippi, on August 14--15, 1965. He advised that the White Knights would eventually ascertain the identities of the parties responsible as they were conducting an investigation themselves in that matter. He stated that investigation has disclosed that a woman is involved. SA GRAVES inquired if that woman was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] AVANTS smiled and said, "You said that, I didn't". He would not elaborate further on the HODGES case except to express, later in the conversation, interest in it.

Reference was also made to the beating of MARVIN WESLEY WILLIS and ELAINE FREEMAN EMFINGER in the Fall of 1964 near Bude, Mississippi. AVANTS stated that, "We gave them a good tanning" (evidently referring to the White Knights); that "the big man in overalls" had done a good job; and that ELAINE would not have been beaten if she had kept her mouth shut.

As the conversation concerning beatings continued, AVANTS mentioned the beating of WILLIE JOE BUTLER who worked on the DRAIN property. He also mentioned an assault on a Negro who was beaten and given castor oil. In the same series of remarks, AVANTS mentioned that "he", while speaking of the Negro, was forced to run in a dark field and ran into a tree. According to AVANTS, the Negro deserved the beating because he looked up women's skirts when they ascended stairs. The victim appeared on television and stated he was not involved in civil rights activity, which statement AVANTS advised was absolutely correct. It was unclear if all of these remarks were intended to refer to BUTLER or whether they referred to two or more separate parties. He would not

furnish any additional information about these matters nor would he clarify which beating or beatings to which he was referring. AVANTS continued that he was not aware of the beating of a Negro from Natchez who had insulted the wife of JACK MOORE.

He advised that there were several "jobs" done in Adams County by "outlaw groups" which did not involve the White Nights.

AVANTS displayed a .44 magnum pistol with a 7½ inch barrel which his wife keeps around the house for protection.

AVANTS advised that he was firmly convinced that the White Knights comprised the most desirable group of southern men in Mississippi. He would never consider joining the United Klans of America, Inc., the old Originals, the Knights of the Green Forest, the Universal Klans of America, the White Camellians, the Silver Dollar Group, or any other group. He did state that the Silver Dollar Group supposedly consisted of the elite or chosen men of the area. He expressed a profound admiration for SAM BOWERS whom he described as the leader of the White Knights. He explained that BOWERS was a highly intelligent man who was self taught. Furthermore, while there is a Jesus in heaven, there is a Jesus here on earth and that man is SAM BOWERS.

JN 157-958  
V. MISCELLANEOUS

On June 26, 1967, Mr. EDWIN BENOIST, Attorney in Adams County, Natchez, Mississippi, advised SA CLARENCE G. PROSPERE that on Friday, June 23, 1967, he was in the Adams County Sheriff's Office, Natchez, Mississippi, in connection with some routine matters. While talking to Sheriff ODELL ANDERS, a telephone call was received by the sheriff and upon termination of the call, Sheriff ANDERS stated that ERNEST AVANTS had called him and asked that the sheriff arrest him, meaning AVANTS, and lock him up as he, AVANTS, was fearful that he would bodily harm someone. Sheriff ANDERS then advised BENOIST that he told AVANTS to take a cab and come to the County Jail.

BENOIST stated that when AVANTS came into the Sheriff's Office, AVANTS began telling him that BENOIST and the District Attorney would never be able to convict him. AVANTS stated that actually a carbine was used to "blow BEN CHESTER WHITE's head off."

BENOIST stated about this time in the conversation, LENOX FORMAN, District Attorney, came into the office and entered into their conversation.

BENOIST stated that AVANTS told them that he would be willing to testify in the BEN CHESTER WHITE case, but that he could not do so because ED FULLER, the brother of CLAUDE FULLER, would have killed him immediately.

BENOIST advised that AVANTS made the following comments concerning his involvement in the BEN CHESTER WHITE case:

AVANTS stated that CLAUDE FULLER had phoned him on a Tuesday and said he needed to whip a Negro and wanted AVANTS to go with him. AVANTS inquired as to why FULLER wanted to whip the Negro and FULLER stated the Negro was going around to the Negro churches and telling Negroes that they should be marrying white people. AVANTS stated that he agreed that a Negro of this type needed whipping.

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AVANTS went on to state that on the following Friday, FULLER came by the place of the International Paper Company where AVANTS was working and asked if AVANTS was still going with him. AVANTS stated he advised FULLER that he was going as he had been thinking this matter over for the past two days. AVANTS then pointed out to BENOIST, FORMAN and Sheriff ANDERS that he and CLAUDE FULLER were not in the same group.

AVANTS stated he did not know that FULLER intended to kill the Negro, but thought they were going to only whip him. AVANTS stated when they stopped on the bridge he thought they would bend the Negro over the bridge railing and whip him because he knew that they had brought a whip or a large strap with them in the car.

AVANTS stated it was<sup>4</sup> his personal opinion that the Negro was actually killed because the Negro had seen CLAUDE FULLER stealing and butchering cows.

AVANTS admitted that he himself had stolen and killed cows, which was known to Sheriff ANDERS, as Sheriff ANDERS had recovered the bullets from some of the cows and had the FBI Laboratory conduct ballistic tests which showed the bullets came from guns owned by ERNEST AVANTS. AVANTS also admitted that he had defrauded the Brookhaven, Mississippi, Production Credit Association, but that this was also information already known to Sheriff ANDERS.

BENOIST stated that at no time during the course of the conversation set forth previously was AVANTS advised of his rights against self-incrimination. Mr. BENOIST pointed out that at one time AVANTS inquired if the conversation was being recorded and he was told that the conversation was not being record, it could not be used against him because he had not been advised of his rights against self-incrimination. Mr. BENOIST stated that he felt had AVANTS been advised of his rights against self-incrimination, he would not have spoken as freely as he did. BENOIST further pointed out that as previously stated AVANTS came to the jail in a drunken condition and he did not feel that AVANTS was sober during the conversation, but was actually under the influence of alcohol.

JN 157-958

The following characterizations are included in the appendix of this report:

Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (OKKKK)  
Realm of Mississippi

Original Ku Klux Klan of America, Inc.  
(Louisiana) (OKA)

United Klans of America, Inc. Knights  
of the Ku Klux Klan (UKA)

White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of  
Mississippi (WKKKKOM)

Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan  
(Louisiana) (OKKKK)

Silver Dollar Group

A P P E N D I X

ORIGINAL KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN  
(LOUISIANA)  
(OKKKK)

A source advised on October 25, 1963, that an organization known as the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (OKKKK) had been organized in the State of Louisiana at Shreveport, Louisiana, in December of 1960.

A second source advised on August 12, 1966, that the OKKKK continues to be active within the State of Louisiana, and that the aims and purposes of this organization continue to be to promote Americanism, the supremacy of the white race, and the furtherance of segregation between the races.

A P P E N D I X

1

ORIGINAL KNIGHTS OF THE  
KU KLUX KLAN (OKKKK)  
REALM OF MISSISSIPPI

A source advised that at an election of the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America, Incorporated, (OKA) held at Polkville, Mississippi, on December 7, 1967, Ernest Gilbert was elected Grand Dragon replacing Ferrall Mc Cormick, Sr.

Ernest Gilbert in reorganizing this group renamed it the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and stated the organization will hereafter be known as such.

Gilbert stated this organization is not affiliated with any national or other state group.

Gilbert said that it will be an independent, self-supporting, organization within the State of Mississippi, whose function will be to serve the people of Mississippi.

The purpose of this organization is to promote Americanism, the supremacy of the white race, and furtherance of segregation between the races. In addition, to educate the people; for example, if changes are to be made they should be made through political means and not through violence.

-13-

A P P E N D I X

## APPENDIX

### ORIGINAL KU KLUX KLAN OF AMERICA, INC. (LOUISIANA) (OKA)

Records of the Secretary of State, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, reflect that a Louisiana corporate charter was issued to the Original Ku Klux Klan of America, Inc., on January 26, 1965, at Monroe, Louisiana.

A source advised on May 16, 1965, that at a Province meeting in Winnsboro, Louisiana, of the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (OKKKK) held in December, 1964, there was a considerable dissension among the members and as a result, a split in the OKKKK occurred. Houston Morris and Robert Fuller led the split and formed the Original Ku Klux Klan of America, Inc., according to the source.

A second source advised on October 1, 1965, that Houston Morris and Robert Fuller formed the Original Ku Klux Klan of America, Inc. (OKA) after splitting away from the OKKKK in December, 1964. The second source advised that the OKA has the same general purposes as the OKKKK; that is, the promotion of Americanism, white supremacy and the maintaining of segregation.

The second source also advised that Robert Fuller assumed the leadership position of Grand Dragon of the OKA in February, 1965, after Houston Morris left the organization. The second source further advised that the OKA does not have any units chartered outside of the State of Louisiana.

## APPENDIX



1APPENDIXSILVER DOLLAR GROUP

A source on April 4, 1967, and a second source on May 3, 1967, characterized the Silver Dollar Group as a hard-core action group made up of present and former members of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi (WKKKKOM); the United Klans of America, Inc. (UKA); and Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi and Louisiana.

On August 15, 1967, a third source advised that the Silver Dollar Group was formed approximately in May or June, 1964. The secret group within the Klan was formed to further Klan activities involving the promotion of Americanism, white supremacy, and maintaining total segregation. Klansmen were dissatisfied with the inactivity in their respective Klan groups. The members of the new secret action unit had to be trusted Klansmen and had to vouch for each other.

No formal organization format has been adopted but group membership is obtained by invitation only and upon receipt of a silver dollar coin from the group organizer Raleigh Jackson Glover.

-14a-

APPENDIX

UNITED KLANS OF AMERICA, INC.,  
KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN (UKA)

Records of Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, reflect that this Klan organization was granted a corporate charter on February 21, 1961, at Atlanta, Georgia, under the name United Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America, Inc.

A source advised on February 27, 1961, that United Klans was formed as a result of a split in the U. S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. According to the source, the split resulted from a leadership dispute and United Klans has the same aims and objectives as the parent group. These are the promotion of Americanism, white supremacy, and segregation of the races.

The first source and a second source advised in July, 1961, that United Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America, Inc., merged with Alabama Knights, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The merged organization established headquarters in Suite 401, Alston Building, Tuscaloosa, Alabama. (The organization is directed by ROBERT SHELTON, Imperial Wizard, and is the dominant Klan group in the South, with Units in several Southern states.)

Second source advised that at a meeting in Prattville, Alabama, on October 22, 1961, the U. S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, merged with the United Klans of America, Inc., Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

Third source advised on May 25, 1966, that the UKA is currently an active organization, with Klaverns in several states. This source said that ROBERT M. SHELTON is the Imperial Wizard of this organization and was elected to this position on September 5, 1964, at a National Klonvocation in Birmingham, Alabama. Source stated that during April, 1966, the National office was moved from Suite 401, Alston Building, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to the carport of SHELTON's residence, #18 Lake Sherwood, Star Route, Northport, Alabama, which space he had converted into a room.

APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

### WHITE KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN OF MISSISSIPPI (WKKKKOM)

A source advised that on February 15, 1964, approximately 200 members of the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan from the State of Mississippi met at Brookhaven, Mississippi. Those present decided to defect from the Original Knights and to form their own Klan group in Mississippi to be known as the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Mississippi.

This source advised that the aims and purposes of the WKKKKOM are to preserve Christian civilization, protect and promote white supremacy and the segregation of the races, to fight Communism and to extend the dignity, heritage, and rights of the white race of America.

The same source advised on August 25, 1967, that the WKKKKOM is an unincorporated, secret organization existing in the State of Mississippi and formed for the sole purpose of preserving white supremacy regardless of the cost and including the use of force and violence. The official constitution and other directives of the organization do not openly advocate the use of force or violence; however, it is generally conceded among the members that in the end force and violence will be the salvation of the white man regarding his relationship with the Negro race. The WKKKKOM is controlled by the Imperial Wizard and state officers. The state is divided into districts and provinces. There is an estimated membership as of August 25, 1967, of 400 to 600 dues-paying members of this organization. The aims and purposes of the organization continue to be the same as when the organization was created in February, 1964. Sam Holloway Bowers, Jr., Laurel, Mississippi, continues to be the Imperial Wizard.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Jackson, Mississippi  
April 1, 1968

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Title ERNEST HENRY AVANTS

Character RACIAL MATTERS (KLAN)

Reference Report of Special Agent Michael  
J. O'Neill dated and captioned as  
as above.

All sources (except any listed below) whose identities  
are concealed in referenced communication have furnished reliable  
information in the past.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property  
of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside  
your agency.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 1/8/68

Mrs. ERNEST H. (GLADYS S.) AVANTS, 114 Hammitt Street, Natchez, Mississippi, was contacted and advised of the identity of the interviewing Agent and the nature of the inquiry.

She stated her husband was asleep, as he had pulled two shifts at the International Paper Company, Incorporated and would not be available for interview until Tuesday or Wednesday, January 9 or 10, 1968. She stated she doubted that ERNEST H. AVANTS would talk to Special Agents of the FBI since the AVANTS family had suffered so much from his talking to the FBI.

Mrs. AVANTS refused to awaken her husband for interview.

*make SF*  
*Reassign to M. O'Neill*  
*2/6/68*  
*157-958 -121*  
*sync by 3/31/68*

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 9 1968	
FBI - JACKSON	

*Boyd* *EB*

157-6253  
 44-2044

On 1/5/68 at Natchez, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-958

by SA GEORGE P. GAMBLIN/wgj Date dictated 1/5/68

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

## Avant's Jury Is Chosen; Murder Trial Underway

NATCHEZ, Miss. (UPI) -- A circuit court jury of nine white and three Negro men stood ready today to hear the first testimony in the trial of a white man charged with a "gang" murder of an elderly Negro 18 months ago.

Defense attorney Travis Buckley agreed to the final members of the jury late Thursday to conclude four laborious days of jury selection for the murder trial of Ernest Avants.

Circuit Judge James A. Tor-

rey ordered Dist. Atty. Lenox Prosecutor Edward Benoist Jr. Forman and Adams County Prosecutor Edward Benoist Jr. to be prepared to proceed with the state's case.

Avants, James Lloyd Jones, and Claude M. Fuller are accused of luring Ben Chester White, a 65-year-old Negro farm hand, into a car June 12, 1966, on the pretense of helping look for a lost dog, and then shooting the elderly Negro and dumping his body into a creek.

Jones, 57, turned state's evidence at a preliminary hearing a year ago and said he drove the car the night the Negro was killed but that Fuller and Avants did the actual shooting. Jones' murder trial ended with a hung jury. A new trial date was expected to be set today.

Forman charged during final arguments at Jones' trial that the slaying was a type of initiation to solidify his loyalty as a new member of the "cotton mouth moccasin gang," described as similar to the Ku Klux Klan in purpose.

Both Fuller, 47, and Avants, 36, had been identified by the House Committee on Un-American Activities last year as KKK members.

The slaying came after several months of bitter boycotts and marches by civil rights forces. There also had been a number of bombings and earlier this year, a Negro leader was killed when a bomb planted in his truck exploded.

A large number of the 211 prospective jurors summoned for the trial were excused because they already had formed fixed opinions in the widely publicized case. An almost equal number, however, were excused after they said they were opposed to capital punishment.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE ONE

LAUREL LEADER-CALL

LAUREL, MISS.

Date: 12/12/67

Edition: final

Author:

Editor: J. W. West

Title: EARNEST AVANTS

Character:

or

157-958

Classification: 157-6253

Submitting Office: JACKSON

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED INDEXED  
SERIALIZED FILED

DEC 13 1967

FBI - JACKSON

157-958-117

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

## Avants Claims He Shot Corpse

NATCHEZ, Miss. (UPI)—The prosecution and defense rested their cases abruptly this morning in the murder trial here of one of three white men accused in the brutal slaying of an elderly Negro.

Two FBI agents testified earlier that defendant Ernest Avants told them he expected to be acquitted because he merely blew off the top of the head of a corpse.

The jury was expected to get the case by early afternoon.

The prosecution called two additional witnesses and the defense rested without summoning a witness, after being denied a motion for a directed verdict of innocent.

The agents, Robert F. Boyle of Memphis and Alan Kornblum of Gulfport, Miss., said that Earnest Avants told them "a fellow by the name of Fuller" shot and killed White with a barrage of 17 rifle shots before Avants cut loose with his shotgun.

Authorities claim that White, 65, was killed merely because he was convenient and fitted in to a plan to lure integration leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to this river city for assassination.

Avants, 37, Claude M. Fuller, 47, and James L. Jones, 57, were charged in the June 12, 1956, slaying.

The three allegedly lured White into their auto on the pretense of getting them to help hunt for a dog, then drove him to a remote area and shot him to death despite pleas for mercy.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE ONE

LAUREL LEADER-CALH

LAUREL, MISS

Date: 12/12/67

Edition: Final

Author:

Editor: J. W. West

Title: Earnest Avants

Character:

or

157-958

Classification: 157-6253

Submitting Office: Jackson

☐ Being Investigated 157-958-114

SEARCHED <i>LLH</i>	INDEXED <i>LLH</i>
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DEC 12 1967	
FBI — JACKSON	

*157-958-114*  
*12/12/67*  
*WJW*

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

## Avants Jury Is Chosen; Murder Trial Underway

NATCHEZ, Miss. (UPI) — A circuit court jury of nine white and three Negro men stood ready today to hear the first testimony in the trial of a white man charged with a "gang" murder of an elderly Negro 18 months ago.

Defense attorney Travis Buckley agreed to the final members of the jury late Thursday to conclude four laborious days of jury selection for the murder trial of Ernest Avants.

Circuit Judge James A. Tor-

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Avants, James Lloyd Jones, and Claude M. Fuller are accused of luring Ben Chester White, a 65-year-old Negro farm hand, into a car June 12, 1966, on the pretense of helping look for a lost dog, and then shooting the elderly Negro and dumping his body into a creek.

Jones, 57, turned state's evidence at a preliminary hearing a year ago and said he drove the car the night the Negro was killed but that Fuller and Avants did the actual shooting. Jones' murder trial ended with a hung jury. A new trial date was expected to be set today.

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The slaying came after several months of bitter boycotts and marches by civil rights forces. There also had been a number of bombings and earlier this year, a Negro leader was killed when a bomb planted in his truck exploded.

A large number of the 211 prospective jurors summoned for the trial were excused because they already had formed fixed opinions in the widely publicized case. An almost equal number, however, were excused after they said they were opposed to capital punishment.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE ONE

LAUREL LEADER-CALL

LAUREL, MISS.

Date: 12/12/67

Edition: final

Author:

Editor: J. W. West

Title: EARNEST AVANTS

Character:

or 157-958

Classification: 157-6253

Submitting Office: JACKSON

☐ Being Investigated

157-958-113

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

## 2 FBI Agents Say Avants Confessed

NATCHEZ, Miss. (AP)—Two FBI agents testified Friday that Ernest Avants told them he took part in the brutal 1966 slaying of an elderly Negro near here.

Agents Robert F. Boyle of Memphis and Allen N. Kornbleum of New York testified that they interviewed Avants March 13 on another case and that he voluntarily told them he took part in the murder of 65-year-old Ben Chester White June 10 last year.

Boyle testified that Avants told him he shot White in the head with a shotgun when he

was told to do so by a man he identified only as "Fuller."

Boyle said Avants told him that "Fuller" repeatedly shot White with a rifle before telling him (Avants) to fire the shotgun.

The testimony was first given before Circuit Judge James A. Torrey in the absence of the jury. Torrey admitted the testimony over the objections of the defense that Avants was not informed of his rights against self-incrimination.

The two agents testified that they informed Avants of his rights at the start of the interview. They said he offered the information and they did not ask him any questions.

Avants is the second of three white men under indictment on the murder charge. The others are James L. Jones, 57, and Claude Fuller, 47. Jones was tried in the spring, but a mistrial was declared when the jury could not reach agreement.

White's body was found in a creek near Natchez in June 1966. He had been shot with both a rifle and a shotgun, and had been missing for two days.

The jurors selected for Avant trial were William E. Bell, Henry Russell Jr. and J. C. Brown, identified as Negroes; and Malcolm L. Carter, W. M. Geoghegan, Luther Stowers, Jack M. Moore, Jay B. Lehman, W. L. Burgess, O. C. Monte, Joel W. Mallory and Jesse Foster, the white men.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE ONE

THE CLARION LEDGER

JACKSON, MISS.

12/11/67

Date:

Edition: HOME

Author:

Editor: R.M. Hederman jr.

Title: Earnest Avants

Character:

or

Classification: 157-958

Submitting Office: 157-6253 JACKSON

☐ Being Investigated

157-958-112

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-958)

FROM : SA CLARENCE G. PROSPERE

SUBJECT: ERNEST AVANTS  
RM - KLAN

DATE: 12/6/67

This case is presently in a pending inactive status. It is being pointed out that ERNEST AVANTS is presently being tried in Circuit Court, Natchez, Miss., for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. The murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE is carried in the Jackson Division in JN file 157-6253.

In view of the retirement of SA CLARENCE G. PROSPER, it is suggested that this case be reassigned.

①-Jackson  
CGP/wgj.  
(1)wgj



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157-958-111

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*Reassign to Boyd*

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 9/16/67

ERNEST AVANTS, 114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Mississippi, was interviewed by SA JOHN DENNIS MILLER whose identity is known to AVANTS.

AVANTS advised that his wife had told him that she had told the interviewing Agents she had contacted her lawyer, TRAVIS BUCKLEY, and that BUCKLEY had advised AVANTS not to talk to the FBI--not even to tell them his name.

He continued that he did not wish to assume that attitude but did feel that under the present circumstances, he did not desire to talk concerning any subject to the interviewing Agent.

He stated that TRAVIS BUCKLEY is not his attorney but he is the attorney of his wife. His attorney is BILL RILEY, with whom AVANTS worked on the preceding Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. He declined to disclose the nature of the work he and RILEY performed.

RILEY also instructed AVANTS not to talk to the FBI about anything.

AVANTS continued that he appreciated the fact that the interviewing Agent was willing to perform an analysis of a white liquid substance but that he had already given this substance to his attorney. He did not know what the substance was.

SA MILLER advised AVANTS that he could in no way force him to be interviewed when he did not desire to be interviewed but that should there be a change in circumstances, it might be readily advantageous to AVANTS to be able to converse with SA MILLER. AVANTS advised that he

On 9/13/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File # Jackson 44-2044  
Jackson 157-958 AVANTS  
157-958-103  
by SA JOHN DENNIS MILLER /blw Date dictated 9/14/67

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JN 44-2044

was aware of this and this was one reason he did not want to assume the attitude which his attorneys had suggested; i.e., not even tell the FBI his name.

SA MILLER advised AVANTS that he was willing to meet with him at any time and discuss anything which AVANTS might desire to discuss.

AVANTS advised that he appreciated this attitude and would like to be able to talk with SA MILLER but reiterated that at the present time, he did not feel he could do so.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date September 16, 1967

Mrs. ERNEST AVANTS, 114 Hammett, Natchez, Mississippi, advised SA JOHN DENNIS MILLER, whose identity is known to Mrs. AVANTS, that her husband was asleep at that time and was unavailable for interview. In this regard, she mentioned that she did not wish to be rude, but that she had talked with her attorney, TRAVIS BUCKLEY, who had advised her that she and her husband should decline to talk with the FBI about anything.

Upon inquiry, she revealed that she had contacted her attorney because of the recent interest which the interviewing Agent had displayed in her husband.

SA MILLER advised he would contact her husband later in the day to discuss this matter.

On 9/13/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File # Jackson 44-2044  
Jackson 157-958 AVANTS

by SA JOHN DENNIS MILLER /blw Date dictated 9/14/67

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157-958-102

SEARCHED	9/14/67
SERIALIZED	FILED
SEP 22 1967	
FBI - JACKSON	

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 9/9/67

ERNEST AVANTS was interviewed at his residence, 114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Mississippi, by SAs BENJAMIN F. GRAVES and JOHN DENNIS MILLER who identified themselves as Special Agents of the FBI. AVANTS advised he was aware of his constitutional rights, but would be more than willing to talk with the Agents.

He was interviewed for approximately three hours during which time various topics of conversation were discussed. Throughout the interview, AVANTS continually shifted from one topic to another in such a manner that it was often difficult or impossible to comprehend the subject matter of his remarks.

Several times he indicated a willingness to trade information in his possession. He was unwilling and unable, however, to specify what he wanted in return or about what subjects he would be willing to furnish information.

In this regard, he advised that he could furnish no information about the bombing of WHARLEST JACKSON. He did state that he could be of assistance to the FBI in the investigation of the GEORGE METCALFE bombing because "we" (evidently referring to the White Knights) have had some fairly strong opinions concerning that bombing.

Three times AVANTS was asked about a trip to Brookhaven, Mississippi, with TOMMIE LEE JONES to secure medical assistance for JONES following a shooting on the property of a Negro pheasant breeder in Louisiana. SA GRAVES explained to AVANTS that he was not suspected of participating in the trip to Louisiana as Silver Dollar Group members were involved and he was not a Silver Dollar Group member. AVANTS volunteered that some of those involved were subsequently in

Jackson 44-2044

Jackson 157-958

Jackson 157-3830

Jackson 157-5206

Jackson 174-27

157-958-101

9-7-67

On 9/6/67 at Natchez, Mississippi

File #

by SAs JOHN DENNIS MILLER and  
BENJAMIN F. GRAVES /JDM:jls

Date dictated

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FBI - JACKSON	

the Silver Dollar Group, but that the Silver Dollar Group was not in existence at the time of this incident. AVANTS did not comment on his trip with JONES to Brookhaven.

AVANTS displayed acute interest in the murder of EARL HODGES in Eddiceton, Mississippi, on August 14--15, 1965. He advised that the White Knights would eventually ascertain the identities of the parties responsible as they were conducting an investigation themselves in that matter. He stated that investigation has disclosed that a woman is involved. SA GRAVES inquired if that woman was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] AVANTS smiled and said, "You said that, I didn't". He would not elaborate further on the HODGES case except to express, later in the conversation, interest in it.

Reference was also made to the beating of MARVIN WESLEY WILLIS and ELAINE FREEMAN EMFINGER in the Fall of 1964 near Bude, Mississippi. AVANTS stated that, "We gave them a good tanning" (evidently referring to the White Knights); that "the big man in overalls" had done a good job; and that ELAINE would not have been beaten if she had kept her mouth shut.

As the conversation concerning beatings continued, AVANTS mentioned the beating of WILLIE JOE BUTLER who worked on the DRAIN property. He also mentioned an assault on a Negro who was beaten and given castor oil. In the same series of remarks, AVANTS mentioned that "he", while speaking of the Negro, was forced to run in a dark field and ran into a tree. According to AVANTS, the Negro deserved the beating because he looked up women's skirts when they ascended stairs. The victim appeared on television and stated he was not involved in civil rights activity, which statement AVANTS advised was absolutely correct. It was unclear if all of these remarks were intended to refer to BUTLER or whether they referred to two or more separate parties. He would not

furnish any additional information about these matters nor would he clarify which beating or beatings to which he was referring. AVANTS continued that he was not aware of the beating of a Negro from Natchez who had insulted the wife of JACK MOORE.

He advised that there were several "jobs" done in Adams County by "outlaw groups" which did not involve the White Nights.

AVANTS displayed a .44 magnum pistol with a 7½ inch barrel which his wife keeps around the house for protection.

AVANTS advised that he was firmly convinced that the White Knights comprised the most desirable group of southern men in Mississippi. He would never consider joining the United Klans of America, Inc., the old Originals, the Knights of the Green Forest, the Universal Klans of America, the White Camellians, the Silver Dollar Group, or any other group. He did state that the Silver Dollar Group supposedly consisted of the elite or chosen men of the area. He expressed a profound admiration for SAM BOWERS whom he described as the leader of the White Knights. He explained that BOWERS was a highly intelligent man who was self taught. Furthermore, while there is a Jesus in heaven, there is a Jesus here on earth and that man is SAM BOWERS.



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/21/67

ERNEST AVANTS was interviewed at his residence, 114 Hammett Street, Natchez, Mississippi, by Special Agents EARL E. BOYD and JOHN DENNIS MILLER who identified themselves as Special Agents of the FBI. SA MILLER advised AVANTS of the nature of the investigation and began to explain to AVANTS his constitutional rights. AVANTS interrupted and stated he had been interviewed many times by the FBI, was fully aware of his rights, and would gladly talk with the Agents, but did not desire to sign a waiver of rights form.

AVANTS advised that approximately six months ago he had a .22 caliber rifle stolen from his house. He theorized the thief must have had a key to the house as no windows or doors bore evidence of forceable entry. In AVANTS' opinion a Klansman might have stolen the rifle. He explained that it was possible that some members of the Klan did not want him in Natchez any longer. He would not elaborate on this point. He continued that if this rifle was left at the scene of a murder, he could be convicted and put in jail. This theft has not been reported to the Adams County Sheriff's Office.

He continued that the Klan is not assisting financially with his defense in the trial which concerns the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE. He did state that some Klansmen came to his wife while he was in jail and informed her that the Klan would assist him financially if he would agree to use the Klan lawyer. This he refused to do. AVANTS did not desire to furnish any names of individuals involved.

He inquired as to the whereabouts of the Special Agent who had visited him previously, explaining that he

On 8/18/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File # Jackson 44-2044  
SAs EARL E. BOYD and Jackson 157-958  
by JOHN DENNIS MILLER /JDM/jls Jackson 157-1519  
Jackson 157-6253  
Jackson 157-MARVIN McKINNEY  
Jackson 44-488  
8/19/67

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157-958-99

desired to ascertain why that Agent thought he, AVANTS, had attended a fishfry in Wildsville, Louisiana. AVANTS denied he had attended any such fishfry.

When asked about the shooting of a Negro named BUTLER in Mississippi, AVANTS stated he was familiar with the case and knew the identities of most of the individuals responsible, but did not desire to comment any further on the matter.

He advised that he knows MARVIN MC KINNEY and his brother, "BIG MAC" MC KINNEY, and has no opinion one way or the other about the two men. AVANTS advised that he did not desire to furnish any information to the FBI because as soon as he told something to the FBI, it would be spread all over town. Furthermore, AVANTS stated he has nothing to gain and everything to lose furnishing information to the FBI.

AVANTS is certain that the Negroes killed WHARLEST JACKSON because it is relatively easy to look back on the murder and observe which race gained most from it.

AVANTS advised that he became incensed at CHARLES EVERS when EVERS announced that AVANTS had received a raise and a promotion at International Paper Company after he had been released from jail. This untrue statement by EVERS served to confirm AVANTS' opinion that Negroes in general and Negro leaders in particular are basically dishonest and untrustworthy. He advised that he does not hate Negroes, but that he did not feel as though he would feel any remorse if all Negroes suddenly disappeared. AVANTS concluded by stating that he had no objection to additional contacts by the FBI.

SAC, JACKSON (44-2044)

8/30/67

SA BENJAMIN F. GRAVES

WHARBON

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

Re memo of SA ERNEST M. COCHRANE, 8/24/67.

[redacted] was contacted on 8/27/67 by SA ERNEST M. COCHRANE and the writer and furnished the following information:

Sometime before August, 1964, the month in which the UKA was formed in the State of Mississippi, TOMMIE LEE JONES, ERNEST HENRY AVANTS (whom source identified from a photograph), and two other individuals unknown to the source, went to the Houston Oil Field Material Company in Brookhaven, Miss., where the source was working. Source advised at that time, he was working in the office at night and he began work at 5:00 p.m. He believed this group arrived in the late afternoon or early evening. One of the men whom the source did not know came into the office and told the source that JONES and the others were outside.

Source advised that it was no surprise to him when JONES and the others appeared at his office, consequently, he assumes someone had telephoned him to expect the group or someone had told him in person that this group was coming to see him.

Source said he went outside and as he approached the automobile, which he believes to have been green or red in color with bucket seats, JONES was getting out of the rear seat. JONES told the source that he had been shot and that he had a pellet in the cheek of his face. JONES said that his throat and jaw were sore and he feared infection. Source stated that JONES at that time

2 - 44-2044

1 - [redacted]

1 - 157-5206 (SDG)

1 - 157-8449 (UNSUBS; JAMES WHITE, SR. - VICTIM)

1 - 157- (TOMMIE LEE JONES)

① - 157- ERNEST HENRY AVANTS)

BFG/blw (7)

157-958-98

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
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FBI - JACKSON	

did not have a bandage on his wound. Source did not know which side of JONES' face had been wounded but he thought it was on the right side. Source stated that JONES related a story that he had been following a man and his date and the man stopped his car and shot at JONES with a shotgun. JONES told the source he needed his assistance in obtaining the services of a doctor.

Source stated that while he was talking with JONES, an individual who had first come into his office was standing beside him listening to the conversation. Source could not identify the individual who first came into his office, nor could he furnish a description of him due to the lapse of time since the incident occurred.

Source stated he went back into his office, possibly accompanied by JONES, and telephoned Dr. JAMES E. SABLEY at his Brookhaven, Miss., residence. Source related JONES' story to the doctor as to how he had become injured. JONES did not want his identity revealed to the doctor and the doctor did not want to know the identity of the patient. Dr. SABLEY agreed to meet the injured individual at his office.

After telephoning the doctor, source stated he went back outside and gave this group directions to the doctor's office.

Source advised he recalled one of the individuals in the automobile was of small build and he picked out a photograph of JAMES E. BLANEY as appearing to have a similar build as this small individual.

Source advised that the fourth individual in this vehicle, he believed was the driver and he could not recall the identity of this individual nor could he furnish a description of him.

JN 44-2044

Source is of the opinion that the doctor treated JONES but the doctor had thought it best not to remove the pellet.

Source stated he did not discuss this matter with the doctor, JONES, or anyone else subsequent to the incident. He could not recall the reason that he was of the opinion the pellet had not been removed from JONES' cheek.

- 3\* -

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FOIA(b) (6)  
FOIA(b) (7) - (C)Date July 18, 1967

Mrs. ALICE SUE RILEY, Box 16, advised that ERNEST AVANTS had been to several parties she had attended at JOE LEE HARDY's residence. The last party she could remember him attending was in October, 1966. She advised that she has not seen AVANTS since this time.

PERCY and LILLIAN NETTLES formerly resided in the rural area north of Washington, Mississippi, but have since moved to Bluebird Drive in Natchez, Mississippi.

She advised that JOHN and SHIRLEY STOWERS are associates of the HARDY family and that SHIRLEY is quite close to JEAN HARDY. She was of the opinion that

She is further of the opinion that

CHARLES DAVIDSON, who resides on Morgantown Road, Natchez, Mississippi, has been a very close friend and associate of HARDY but they have not been seen together recently. She stated that there is a possibility that they have had a disagreement and are no longer associating. DAVIDSON, as well as HARDY and other individuals known to have been past or present members in various Klan organizations, both in Adams County, Mississippi, and Concordia Parish, Louisiana, frequent TINY LEWIS' Bar-B-Que Pit on Highway 61, north, in Natchez, Mississippi.

Rumors have been circulating that VERNON STRAHAN of Natchez, Mississippi, had received threatening telephone calls in February, 1967, because of STRAHAN's cohabitation with a Negro woman. Speculation has it that the "Klan's list."

STRAHAN is on  
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AUG 1 1967

Jackson 44-204-3120

157-2778; 157-958;

157-2839; 157-987;

157-1519; 157-343

157-5409; 157-293

Date dictated 7/17/67On 7/15/67 at Washington, Mississippi File #by SA EARL E. BOYD /blw

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157-958-96

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 3/5/84 BY SP4 clw/jlm

Mrs. RILEY stated that JOE LEE HARDY has gone with a girl, name unknown, who works at the Han-dee Stop store located between Vidalia and Ferriday, Louisiana. She does not know if HARDY is presently seeing this lady but does know that he is known to have been conducting numerous affairs with other women.

HARDY had formerly been a very close associate of REGGIE CARTER, who resides on North Pine Street, Natchez, Mississippi. CARTER and HARDY shared a boat for two summers. She did not know if HARDY and CARTER have been associating with one another recently. CARTER previously had a Pan-Am service station in Concordia Parish, Louisiana, but approximately five or six years ago, [REDACTED] and subsequently moved across the river into Adams County, Mississippi.

JOHN BARBER, who works off shore in the Gulf of Mexico on an oil drilling rig but who resides in Natchez, Mississippi, is associated with the Klan in the Adams County area. On the evening that Natchez Mayor JOHN NOSSER's house was bombed, BARBER called VIRGINIA WHITLEY, who formerly lived north of Washington, Mississippi, and said that he wanted to come to their house as he needed an alibi. Mrs. WHITLEY, her husband (FRED), Mrs. RILEY, and BARBER drank coffee together for an indefinite period during the evening. The WHITLEYS have since moved to Vidalia, Louisiana. Mrs. WHITLEY is employed at Gibson's Discount Store in Natchez, Mississippi, and FRED WHITLEY is employed by Sealtest.

Mrs. RILEY advised that when the attorney from Laurel, Mississippi, whom she thought was TRAVIS BUCKLEY, visited Natchez concerning the trial of JAMES LLOYD JONES for the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE, he stayed at the HARDY residence. She could not pinpoint the exact date of this occurrence.

JN 44-2044

Mrs. RILEY concluded by saying that she did not think that JOE LEE HARDY had attended the Klan meeting for JIMMY SWAN near Prentiss, Mississippi, on July 8, 1967.



7/18/67

**AIRTEL**

**AIR MAIL**

**TO: SAC, JACKSON (44-2044)**

**FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (44-3214) (P)**

**WHARBON**

Re Jackson airtel to New Orleans, 6/22/67, which requested the Veterans Administration at New Orleans be recontacted and information contained in the R & E (Rehabilitation and Education) Folder for ERNEST H. AVANTS, Claim # C-17 47 50 12, be furnished.

Enclosed for Jackson are 25 copies of an investigative insert setting forth the results of this contact with the Veterans Administration at New Orleans.

③ - Jackson (Encls. 25) (RM)  
2 - New Orleans  
SNC:sab  
(5)

157-958-95

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JUL 21 1967	
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7/18/67

AIRTEL

AIR MAIL

TO: SAC, JACKSON (44-2044)

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (44-3214) (P)

WHARBOM

Re Jackson airtel to New Orleans, 6/22/67, which requested the Veterans Administration at New Orleans be recontacted and information contained in the R & E (Rehabilitation and Education) Folder for ERNEST H. AVANTS, Claim # C-17 47 50 12, be furnished.

Enclosed for Jackson are 25 copies of an investigative insert setting forth the results of this contact with the Veterans Administration at New Orleans.

3 - Jackson (Encls. 25) (RM)  
2 - New Orleans  
SMC:sab  
(5)

157-958-95

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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FBI-JACKSON	

1

JN 44-2044  
NO 44-3214  
SMC:sab

The following investigation was conducted by  
SA STEPHEN M. CALLENDER on July 18, 1967, at New Orleans,  
Louisiana:

Mr. LEON GRABERT, Assistant Chief, Administrative  
Division, Veterans Administration, Room T-4011, 701 Loyola  
Avenue, provided the following information:

Mr. GRABERT informed that the records of his agency  
reveal that the Rehabilitation and Education (R & E) Folder  
for ERNEST H. AVANTS, Claim No. C-17 47 50 12, has been  
destroyed; however, his records on file do not indicate the  
date of destruction.

Mr. GRABERT stated that his records indicate that  
AVANTS was issued a Certificate of Eligibility, which entitled  
AVANTS to the rehabilitation and education provisions of  
Public Law 550 (Korean War). These records reveal that AVANTS  
never used this Certificate of Eligibility; and, according  
to the policy of the Veterans Administration at that time,  
the R & E Folder was destroyed when the Certificate of  
Eligibility was not used. Mr. GRABERT stated a notation  
should have been on AVANTS' file to show that AVANTS' R & E  
Folder had been destroyed. Mr. GRABERT stated that he would  
telephonically contact the Veterans Administration, Records  
Processing Center at St. Louis, Missouri, on this date to  
determine if there was any notation on AVANTS' file which  
is located at this center.

Subsequently on July 18, 1967, Mr. GRABERT informed  
that he had telephonically contacted his agency at the Veterans  
Administration Records Processing Center at St. Louis, Missouri,  
and had been advised that there was a notation on the outside  
of AVANTS' folder which indicated AVANTS' R & E Folder had  
been destroyed in 1959.

157-958-94

SEARCHED <i>DB</i>	INDEXED <i>DB</i>
SERIALIZED <i>DB</i>	FILED <i>DB</i>
JUL 24 1967	
FBI - JACKSON	

*[Signature]*

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date July 3, 1967

1

Mr. EDWIN BENOIST, County Attorney, Adams County, Natchez, Mississippi, advised that on Friday, June 23, 1967, he was in the Adams County Sheriff's Office, Natchez, Mississippi, in connection with routine matters. While talking to Sheriff ODELL ANDERS, a telephone call was received by Sheriff ANDERS and upon termination of the phone call, Sheriff ANDERS stated that ERNEST AVANTS had called him and asked that the Sheriff arrest him and lock him up as he, AVANTS, was fearful that he would do bodily harm to someone. Sheriff ANDERS then advised BENOIST that he told AVANTS to take a cab and come to the County Jail.

Subsequently, AVANTS arrived at the County Jail in a cab and told Sheriff ANDERS he had no money with which to pay his cab fare. Sheriff ANDERS then paid the cab fare of AVANTS.

BENOIST stated that when AVANTS came into the office where he was sitting, AVANTS began telling him that BENOIST and the District Attorney would never be able to convict him. AVANTS stated that actually a carbine was used to blow BEN CHESTER WHITE's head off.

BENOIST stated about this time in the conversation, LENOX FORMAN, District Attorney, came into the office and entered into a conversation.

BENOIST stated that AVANTS told them that he would be willing to testify in the BEN CHESTER WHITE case but that he could not do so because ED FULLER, the brother of CLAUDE FULLER, would have him killed immediately.

BENOIST stated that AVANTS said the Cottonmouth Moccasins came about in this way: The JACKSON boys told

On 6/26/67 at Natchez, Mississippi File # Jackson 44-2044  
Jackson 157-958  
Jackson 157-6253

by SA CLARENCE G. PROSPERE /blw

Date dictated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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JUL 12 1967	
FBI - JACKSON	

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157-958-93

JAMES LLOYD JONES when he was sworn into the Klan that if he violated the oath of the Klan, this would be like being bitten by a cottonmouth moccasin. AVANTS stated there is not, and to his knowledge has never been, a group known as the Cottonmouth Moccasin group and he feels that JONES repeated the story to Sheriff ANDERS, who in turn testified to this information in court and during the course of repeating the information, it was turned around so that it appeared there was a group called the Cottonmouth Moccasins.

BENOIST stated AVANTS said that when he talked about "those men" he was referring to SAM BOWERS and CHARLIE BLACKWELL, who are "good men." AVANTS stated that TRAVIS BUCKLEY was "no good." AVANTS went on to say that "they" do not like BILL RILEY and that RILEY is on a retainer for the Klan and is paid each month. AVANTS stated that he himself is paying RILEY on a monthly basis to represent him.

BENOIST advised that AVANTS went on to state that CLAUDE FULLER is not a member of "their group." AVANTS stated that he had taken CLAUDE FULLER to Laurel, Mississippi, on one occasion and that the next time FULLER was not coming back. AVANTS stated that SAM BOWERS and his group do not care about CLAUDE FULLER but that they are afraid of his brother, ED FULLER.

BENOIST advised that AVANTS made the following comments concerning his involvement in the BEN CHESTER WHITE case. AVANTS stated that CLAUDE FULLER had phoned him on a Tuesday and said he needed to whip a Negro and wanted AVANTS to go with him. AVANTS inquired as to why FULLER wanted to whip the Negro and FULLER stated the Negro was going around to the Negro churches and telling Negroes that they should be marrying white people. AVANTS stated that he agreed that a Negro of this type needed whipping.

AVANTS went on to state that on the following Friday, FULLER came by the place in the International Paper Plant where AVANTS was working and asked if AVANTS was still going with him. AVANTS stated he advised FULLER what he was going as he had been thinking this matter over for the past two days. AVANTS then pointed out to BENOIST, FORMAN, and Sheriff ANDERS that he and CLAUDE FULLER were not in the same group.

AVANTS stated he did not know that FULLER intended to kill the Negro but thought they were going to only whip him. AVANTS stated when they stopped on the bridge, he thought they would bend the Negro over the bridge railing and whip him because he knew that they had brought a whip or a large strap with them in the car.

AVANTS stated it was his personal opinion that the Negro was actually killed because the Negro had seen CLAUDE FULLER stealing and butchering cows.

AVANTS admitted that he himself had stolen and killed cows which was known to Sheriff ANDERS as Sheriff ANDERS had recovered the bullets from some of the cows and had the FBI Laboratory conduct ballistics tests which showed the bullets came from guns owned by ERNEST AVANTS. AVANTS also admitted that he had defrauded the Brookhaven, Mississippi, Production Credit Association but that this was also information already known to Sheriff ANDERS. He stated he did not feel that Sheriff ANDERS and the District Attorney were interested in these crimes but that they were more concerned with the murder of BEN CHESTER WHITE.

AVANTS stated he would be willing to take a truth serum administered by a reputable doctor in the presence of County Attorney EDWIN BENOIST but that he wished to go deep into the woods to take the serum in order that there would be no FBI Agents in the vicinity.

BENOIST stated that at no time during the course of the conversation set forth previously was AVANTS advised of his rights against self-incrimination. Mr. BENOIST pointed out that at one time, AVANTS inquired if the conversation was being recorded and he was told that the conversation was not being recorded, it could not be used against him because he had not been advised of his rights against self-incrimination. Mr. BENOIST stated that he felt had AVANTS been advised of his rights against self-incrimination, he would not have spoken as freely as he did. BENOIST further pointed out that as previously stated, AVANTS came to the jail in a drunken condition and he did not feel that AVANTS was sober during the conversation but was actually under the influence of alcohol.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-958)

DATE: 6/28/67

FROM : SA ROBERT T. BAUTER

SUBJECT: ERNEST AVANTS  
RM - KLAN

On 6/27/67 inquiry was made at the Admissions office, Veterans Administration Hospital, Jackson, Mississippi, to determine if the subject was a patient at that hospital. There was no record of the subject of the subject being presently a patient nor had he been a patient in the last 90 days.

On 6/28/67 WILLIAM EWING, Administrator, Veterans Hospital, advised that AVANTS is not presently nor has he ever been a patient at this hospital. He has a case file in the Claims Section for an ERNEST AVANTS, born 6/13/21. This individual was in the U. S. Army from 6/3/40 through 9/22/45 under ASN RA7003814. This individual has never filed a claim.

157-958-90

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JUN 29 1967	
FBI - JACKSON	

*Prosper*



5010-108-01

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan



6/22/67

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

TO: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (44-3214)

FROM: SAC, JACKSON (44-2044) (P)

WHARBOM

Re St. Louis airtel to Jackson, 6/14/67.

By referenced airtel, the St. Louis Division enclosed copies of a report insert showing the results of an interview of the Veterans Administration (VA) files pertaining to ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, an alleged Silver Dollar Group (SDG) member, who resides in Natchez, Miss. The file of the VA, St. Louis, shows that under the date of November 13, 1953, the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, Ferriday, Louisiana, submitted to the VA Regional Office, Shreveport, Louisiana, a "VA Form 7-1990, Application for Course of Education and Training." This application does not appear in the VA files reviewed at the Records Processing Center in St. Louis.

The St. Louis Division advised that Miss GARON explained in this letter that material pertaining to matters of education are maintained separately in an "R & E (Rehabilitation and Education) Folder," and a notation in the file shows that the R & E Folder pertaining to AVANTS is located at the VA in New Orleans, Louisiana.

LEADS:

NEW ORLEANS

2 - New Orleans (44-3214) (AM)

3 - Jackson (2 - 44-2044)

(1 - 157-958)

CGP/blw  
(5)

*blw*

157-958-88

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*Job*

JN 44-2044  
NO 44-3214

AT NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Will check records of the VA under the name ERNEST H. AVANTS, Claim No. C-17 47 50 12, for information contained in his R & E (Rehabilitation and Education) Folder in connection with his application for course of education and training on VA Form 7-1990, which was submitted under the date November 13, 1953, by the Louisiana Department of Veteran Affairs, Ferriday, Louisiana, to the VA Regional Office, Shreveport, Louisiana.

6/14/67

AIRTEL

AIR MAIL

TO : SAC, JACKSON (44-2044)  
FROM : SAC, ST. LOUIS (44-572) (P)  
SUBJECT: WHARBOM  
OO: Jackson  
Bufile: 44-35496

Re New Orleans airtel, 6/8/67.

Enclosed are the original and 8 copies of a report insert reflecting review of the Veterans Administration (VA) files pertaining to ERNEST HENRY AVANTS.

In addition to the data set forth in the enclosed insert, the VA file includes data pertaining to AVANTS' military service, but includes no such information of pertinence which is not set out in St. Louis letter to Jackson dated 1/20/65, captioned "ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, RM" (Jackson file 157-958) (St. Louis file 157-732).

③ - Jackson (2 - 44-2044) (Encls. 9)  
          ① - 157-958  
1 - St. Louis  
AJR:jc  
(4)

157-958-87

*W/att. JB*  
*see last insert*  
*re - n.o. VA*

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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JUN 16 1967	
FBI - JACKSON	

*C. Prosper*

6/8/67

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

TO: SAC, ST. LOUIS  
FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (44-3214) (P)  
SUBJECT: WHARBON  
(OO: JACKSON)  
BUFILE: 44-35496

Re Jackson letter to New Orleans, 5/29/67. No copy to St. Louis.

On 2/27/67, WHATLEST JACKSON, Negro male, Secretary-Treasurer of Natchez, Mississippi NAACP, was killed by an explosion at approximately 8:10 PM, a which completely demolished a pick-up in which he was riding.

Investigation has been conducted by Jackson Division regarding suspect ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, 1401 Rushing St., Natchez, Miss., who is employed by the International Paper Co. AVANTS is reportedly a member of the Silver Dollar Group which is an action group within the Ku Klux Klan organizations in the Natchez area.

Referenced communication directed that New Orleans Division reviewed AVANTS' Veterans Administration Claim #C-17-47-50-12 for pertinent information.

On 6/7/67, ROBERT E. DECK, Chief Administrative Division, Veterans Administration, New Orleans, advised SA ANDREW J. STEFANAK that AVANTS' file is inactive and

2 - St. Louis  
2 - Jackson (44-2044)  
(1-157-958)  
2 - New Orleans  
AJS - cst  
(6)

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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JUN 10 1967	
FBI - JACKSON	

157-958-86

NO 44-3214  
AJS - cst

has been forwarded to the Veteran's Administration Record Processing Center, 4300 Goodfellow Blvd., Building 104E, St. Louis, Missouri.

LEADS:

ST. LOUIS DIVISION

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI. Will review AVANTS Claim file #C-17-47-50-12, at the Veterans Administration Records Processing Center and report all pertinent information contained in such file.

Expedite.

5/31/67

AIRTEL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-33200)  
FROM: SAC, JACKSON (157-6253) (P)

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS;  
CLAUDE W. FULLER;  
JAMES LLOYD JONES  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CIVIL RIGHTS

Enclosed are the original and 10 copies of LHM dealing with captioned matter. One copy furnished USA, Jackson; Secret Service, Jackson; and 2 copies furnished HIGp, Jackson.

LEAD

JACKSON

AT NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI

Will follow and report civil suit action contemplated against AVANTS, FULLER and JONES.

3 - Bureau (Enc-11)  
5 - Jackson  
    (2 - 157-6253)  
    (1 - 157-798)  
    (1 - 157-958)  
    (1 - 157-6254)

RTB/acp  
(3)  
*[Signature]*

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157-958-84 *Jos*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Jackson, Mississippi  
May 31, 1967

ERNEST HENRY AVANTS;  
CLAUDE W. FULLER;  
JAMES LLOYD JONES  
BEN CHESTER WHITE - VICTIM  
CIVIL RIGHTS

On May 30, 1967, Ben Callon, Attorney, Natchez, Mississippi, advised that on May 23, 1967, he was contacted by two attorneys for Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, Jackson, Mississippi, L. Lackey Rowe, Jr., and Larry Aschenbrenner. He stated these attorneys contacted him as to the advisability of the heirs to the Chester White estate filing a civil suit against Ernest Avants, Claude Fuller, and James Lloyd Jones for the wrongful death of Chester White. Callon stated that his knowledge of these three defendants caused him to advise them against filing any civil suit inasmuch as the defendants were without finances or attachable property. He stated that these two attorneys, however, did petition the Chancery Court of Adams County for Letters of Administration in order that the estate of Chester White can be reopened.

On May 30, 1967, Mrs. Laveta Byrne, Secretary to the Adams County Chancery Court, made available the file of Chester White for reviewing and the following pertinent information is set forth:

A petition for Letters of Administration was filed on May 23, 1967, before the Chancery Court of Adams County, Natchez, Mississippi. The attorney for the petitioner was L. Lackey Rowe, Jr. The petitioner is Jesse White joined by Classie Green, Alsa Schell, Elinore Picking and Isaac Chapman. The petition requested Letters of Administration be granted to Jesse White based on the facts that: I. Chester White departed his life on June 12, 1966, and at the time of death had a fixed residence on Carter Plantation of Adams County. II. The estate of Chester White consists entirely of a wrongful death claim against Ernest Avants, Claude Fuller, and James Lloyd Jones of Natchez. III. The deceased left as his survivors his

- 11 - Bureau
- 1 - USA, Jackson
- 2 - MIGp, Jackson
- 1 - Secret Service, Jackson
- ⑤ - Jackson (2 - 157-6253)  
(1 - 157-796) (① - 157-958)  
(1 - 157-6254)

RTB/acp  
(20) *ay*

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Filed \_\_\_\_\_

157-958-83

Re: ERNEST HENRY AVANTS;  
ET AL

mother, Classie Green, his sisters Alsa Schell and Elinore Picking, a brother Isaac Chapman, and two sons, Jesse White, 1541 Snipe Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Louis White in the U. S. Army in Germany. IV. Of the known heirs of the decedent, those whose affidavit was attached desired that petitioner Jesse White be appointed as Administrator of the estate of Chester White because they felt that he was the best educated and best qualified member of the decedent's family; the remaining heirs have stated that they are afraid to take any step to assist in the institution of a suit for Chester White's death because of the fear of possible reprisals against them.

An order for Letters of Administration was issued by Chancery Judge Curtis L. Collins on May 23, 1967, at Natchez, Mississippi.

On May 30, 1967, the above contemplated suit was brought to the attention of District Attorney Lenox Forman and on May 31, 1967, the same information was brought to the attention of County Attorney Edwin Benoist at Natchez, Mississippi. Mr. Benoist advised that he had not received any information concerning a suit, but surmised one was forthcoming inasmuch as he read of the reopening of Chester White's estate in the newspaper under the caption "Notice to Creditors." He advised that it is not known whether a suit would be filed in the Chancery Court at Adams County or in the Federal Court in Jackson, Mississippi. His office is not going to take any steps to prevent such a suit, but if a suit were to be instituted it could preclude the three defendants from admitting to the present criminal charges against them or to lesser charges of accessory after the fact, knowing that if they were to admit to these charges the civil suit would become a sure thing against them.

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SAC, NEW ORLEANS (44-3214)

5/29/67

SAC, JACKSON (44-2044)

WHARBOM

Investigation has been conducted by the Jackson Division regarding suspect ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, 1401 Rushing Street, Natchez, Mississippi, who is employed by the International Paper Company. AVANTS is reportedly a member of the Silver Dollar Group, which is an "action group" within the Ku Klux Klan organizations in the Natchez area.

During this investigation on 5/9/67, Mr. WILLIAM HEWITT, Assistant Chief Attorney, Veterans Administration Regional Office, Jackson, Mississippi, advised SA JOHN L. PUDDISTER that he was unable to locate any information concerning Veterans Administration Claim #C-17-47-50-12 in his Jackson Office. He stated that he would contact the Central Office of the Veterans Administration in Washington, D. C. in an effort to locate this claim.

On 5/17/67, Mr. HEWITT advised SA PUDDISTER that Veterans Administration Claim File #C-17-47-50-12 in the name of ERNEST HENRY AVANTS, is filed in the Veterans Administration Regional Office, New Orleans, Louisiana.

LEADS:

NEW ORLEANS DIVISION

AT NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Will review AVANTS' Claim File #C-17-47-50-12 at the Veterans Administration Regional Office and report all pertinent information contained in this file.

- 2 - New Orleans  
③ - Jackson  
    (2 - 44-2044)  
    ① - 157-958)

RFB/bgj  
(5) *bgj*

157-958-82

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Serialized	
Indexed	<i>pb</i>
Filed	

*J*