

MEMPHIS SEARCH FOR MEANING COMMITTEE, INC.
3677 Southern Avenue
Memphis, Tenn. 38111

September 30, 1968

To: Charles Holmes
From: David Yellin
Re: Request for interviews with Memphis law enforcement officials

The objective of the Memphis Search for Meaning Committee is to recreate the setting in Memphis during the period of the sanitation strike, February 12 through April 16, 1968. Our purpose is to gather and preserve all the material necessary to allow the reflective and objective eye of history to view the Memphis scene during those 65 days, and to search for an understanding of the significance of this material. Our hope is that by putting the events of this period into historical perspective, insofar as we are able, ~~we~~ we shall be contributing to the improvement and general welfare of our city, state, nation and civilization.

We have at this point interviewed on tape almost one hundred men and women who had been directly and indirectly involved in the events relating to the strike and its aftermath. Although we have covered almost all of the aspects of the situation, the one area that is still missing from our research is that concerned with law enforcement. We believe that facts about police action, and information about the problems the police faced and the decisions they made, not only have significance, but are essential to a proper and comprehensive understanding of the events. And, happily, Mr. Holloman has indicated that with your help we might arrange interviews with police and other law-enforcement

officials so that the historical record will be as nearly complete as possible.

We want to assure all concerned that we will honor and observe all regulations aimed at preventing the disclosure of confidential information, particularly any matters connected with the upcoming trial of James Earl Ray. However, we believe that the present needs of security need not deter the future requirements of history. We believe that it is important to history that the recollections of those involved be recorded while they are still fresh and while, at the same time, they can be safeguarded and stored. They can be taped today and, where necessary, put away under lock and key until it is prudent and proper, in the opinion of the law enforcement officials themselves, to release them.

Furthermore, our research is not directed towards the investigative features concerning the assassination. We do not wish to interview law enforcement officials in order to uncover unknown evidence or hidden facts. As far as the events of the 65 days surrounding the strike, they are, for the most part, a matter of public record. Our aim in talking to Mr. Holloman et al would be to obtain material which will allow fuller interpretation of the law enforcement agencies' involvement in these events of public record. In addition, we want to be sure that the records of history include not only all of the official details, but also the human and individual stories of law enforcement participants. In all of our research, and particularly in our taping of reminiscences, we have tried to go beyond the impersonal recounting of events and into the individual involvement. It is the human being, not the statistic, that finally puts the event into historical perspective, that gives it meaning.

Here following, then, is the list of those we would like to interview:

Director Frank Holloman

Ex-Chief J. C. Macdonald

Chief Henry Lux

Ex-Inspector Sam Evans

Inspector Gagliano

Captain Moore

Lt. Redditt

Sheriff Morris

A group of three or four policemen who were on the scene during the events of February 23 and/or March 28.

The officers in the police car involved in the car-rocking incident of February 23.

The driver of the ambulance that took Dr. King to St. Joseph Hospital.

We will be happy to cooperate in any way you determine in scheduling the taping sessions. However, we do request and urge that the taping be done as soon as possible.

With best regards,



David Yellin