

816-229-6569  
231-3031

STATEMENT TAKEN ON THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 21, 1970, SATURDAY,  
BEGINNING AT 11:00 P.M., PRESENT JUSTIN RAVITZ AND KELLY ZANDERS

- R: Is that correct?
- Z: Yes.
- R: Miss Zanders, I am going to make a statement generally summarizing that which has transpired already this evening and some of the background after making this statement, I'm going to ask for you to add any details to it that you think might be important or correct anything that I misstate, is that okay?
- Z: Yes, that's okay.
- R: We have previously gone over in general terms events that you witnessed on the night of March 29, 1969 outside the New Bethel Church, is that correct?
- Z: That is correct.
- R: And also in addition to that we have gone over certain background of yours which I am going to generally summarize. You live at 1878 East 90th Street, Apt. No. 7, in Cleveland Ohio; you're employed as the executive secretary of the Handyman's Maintenance Service. In Cleveland you have been on that job a little over a year. You are single, you were born November 29, 1948 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. You moved to Cleveland at about the age of 5. You are presently attending Cleveland State University where you are enrolled as a freshman. You are not a member of the RNA. You came to Detroit on Saturday, is that correct?
- Z: Yes, Saturday morning.
- R: March 29, 1969 you travelled by car with Wilbur Gratton, a friend of yours from Cleveland, Baxter Hill, is it Hill or Hills?
- Z: Baxter Hill.
- R: And another friend of his. The first time you ever met Clarence Fuller was at the New Bethel Church on the night of March 29. Since that time you have seen Clarence Fuller on two occasions. You saw him in Cleveland to the best of your memory sometime during the month of August or September of 1969, is that correct?
- Z: That is correct.
- R: And he came to Cleveland for the purpose of seeing you and for the purpose of investigating his case, is that correct?
- Z: That's also correct.

Page 2

R: You also saw him today when you arrived in Detroit and I should mention here that you came here at his request and mine, is that correct?

Z: Yes, he did pick me up at the airport and I came at his request and yours.

R: In addition to that, I wish to point out here that you called me last night, is that correct?

Z: Yes I did.

R: What was the purpose of your call last night.

Z: Choka had asked me to call and find out from you whether it was completely necessary for me to come to Detroit this weekend or next weekend to go over my account of what had happened in March.

R: And my response to you by telephone last night was what?

Z: Your response was that it was very important that we go over the case and that you would take the responsibility of seeing that I got back to Cleveland if I could make it this weekend.

R: And the difficulty was financial in terms of transportation, is that correct?

Z: Yes it was.

R: And when we met tonight ahh I fulfilled the promise I made by giving you some money is that correct.

Z: Yes you did.

R: And how much money was that?

Z: \$20.00.

R: Alright, prior to last night's telephone conversation, have we ever met or discussed the case before?

Z: No we have not.

R: Apart from conversations that you had with Mr. Fuller when he was in Cleveland ahh either in August or September to the best of your memory, have you ever given statements to anyone involving this case?

Z: No I have not.

R: You have never been questioned by any law enforcement agency, I assume.

Z: No I haven't.



- R: You have never been questioned nor given a statement to any other defense attorney or investigator, is that correct?
- Z: No.
- R: Meaning you have not? Is that right asking for a yes answer if that's right?
- Z: No, meaning I have not.
- R: I should point out preliminarily that I also told Miss Zanders that I intended to give her a subpoena while she was here and pay her the appropriate witness fee which shall be in the amount of \$12.00. Is that understood by you?
- Z: Yes, that is understood.
- R: The following portion of this tape shall be in question and answer form beginning as follows:
- Q: Could you estimate the time that you arrived in Detroit on March 29th.
- A: No I could not give you an exact time.
- Q: Was it in the morning or afternoon or evening, if you could say?
- A: I'd say late afternoon.
- Q: Where did you go upon your arrival in Detroit?
- A: We went directly to a Union Hall where the earlier part of the meeting was being held.
- Q: Can you describe that hall in any way?
- A: Only that it was above a store.
- Q: About how long did you remain at that meeting?
- A: To my knowledge about three hours.
- Q: And where did you go from that meeting?
- A: I left the meeting and went to dinner.
- Q: With whom please?
- A: With Baxter Hill and the other man who had been travelling with us.

Q: You do not know that man's name is that correct?

A: No I don't.

Q: Did Mr. Gratton go to dinner with you?

A: No Mr. Gratton left the meeting earlier.

Q: Do you recall where you ate or approximately where you ate?

A: No, I don't recall.

Q: And after dinner where did you go please?

A: After dinner I drove to the 20 Grand Motel with Mr. Hill and the other party. We stayed there about ten minutes at which time they drove me to New Bethel Church.

Q: Did they register or check in at the 20 Grand?

A: They had already checked at the 20 Grand so they went directly to their room.

Q: And then they drove you to the church is that correct?

A: Yes it is.

Q: Did you all enter the church?

A: I entered the church alone.

Q: Do you know if they attended that night's meeting?

A: About five or ten minutes after I entered the church they also entered and stayed about 15 minutes.

Q: Did you see them leave?

A: No I don't recall seeing them leave.

Q: Did you later learn that they had left?

A: I don't recall the exact way they went out but I do know they were leaving.

Q: And did you stay throughout the night meeting at the New Bethel Church?

A: Yes I did.

Q: Can you relate to me where you sat or some of the contents of the meeting to the best of your ability?

A: I sat in the middle aisle about half way. I remember a black reporter taking several pictures. I remember Gaidi speaking and I also remember a woman speaking of the experience she had had with her son and the draft. For the rest of the meeting I paid very little attention.



- Q: Was there any particular reason for your paying very little attention?
- A: I had a headache and I was tired and ready to go back to the hotel.
- Q: Did you stay seated throughout the meeting or not?
- A: During the earlier part of the meeting, I walked around and spoke with various people, during the last part of the meeting I did stay seated.
- Q: Who were you sitting with?
- A: I was sitting with Patricia Deforest and a young man who was with her.
- Q: Where is this Miss Deforest from, if you know?
- A: She is also from Cleveland.
- Q: Did you stay until the meeting terminated?
- A: Yes I did.
- Q: And where did you go or what did you do at the conclusion of the meeting?
- A: At the conclusion of the meeting I stood on the podium a few moments and spoke with Gratton and some of the other members. At that time I walked to the back of the church where I picked up personal items I had left in the back. Choka or Gratton's security guard came to the back to get me to say they were ready to leave and I walked to the front of the church, across the podium and out a side door.
- Q: Are you familiar with the streets that the church is located on?
- A: No I'm not really familiar with the street.
- Q: If I show you a diagram of the church would that be helpful in terms of your relating to me your method of exit and names of streets etc?
- A: Yes it would be.
- Q: In point of fact, I already showed you the diagram, is that correct?
- A: Yes you did.
- R: Let the tape indicate that at this point I am showing Miss Zanders a diagram which I believe was People's Exhibit 1A or 1B or something like that at trial. It is a scale diagram of the New Bethel Church and that general area. Looking at this diagram, Miss Zanders, are you able to indicate for me at what point you left the church

A: I came out one of the two three foot doors on the side of the church to the back.

Q: And that would be closer to Euclid or closer to Philadelphia the two streets running perpendicular to Linwood?

A: It would have been closer to Euclid I believe.

Q: And who did you leave the church with?

A: I left the church with Wilbur Gratton and Choka.

Q: And who is Choka?

A: Choka is the security guard for Wilbur Gratton.

Q: Do you know him by any other name?

A: No I don't.

Q: At the time that you left the church with these two gentlemen, were most of the persons who attended the meeting still inside the church or had most of them left.

A: Most of the people who attended the meeting had left. The people left in the church were primarily guards and members of the RNA.

Q: Did you at any time during the evening see the lobby in the front portion of the church?

A: Yes I did.

Q: Do you know at the time that you left by the door that you have previously described how many people might have been in the front lobby area?

A: When I had left the lobby a few moments before I exited on the back there was a crowd congregated in the lobby.

Q: You don't know if those persons had left at the time you left or if they were still congregated.

A: No I don't.

Q: Were there people leaving immediately in front of you or immediately behind you to the best of your knowledge when you actually exited the building?

A: There was no one leaving in front of me, I don't remember whether there was anyone else behind.

Q: What was the first thing that you observed upon leaving by that door you've described?



A: The first thing I observed was a man firing.

Q: And what was he firing?

A: He was firing a rifle.

Q: Where was he standing in relationship to you and the door?

A: He was standing almost directly in front of the door slightly in front of me when I came out.

Q: If one is facing Linwood directly when exiting by that door would the person firing be immediately in front of you or to your right or to your left?

A: He would have been to my right.

Q: Where were you going when you were leaving the church by the way?

A: We were leaving the church to enter the car of Gaidi.

Q: And where was that car to have been?

A: The car was to have been parked directly in front of the door.

Q: Did you see a car parked there?

A: No I don't recall seeing a car.

Q: Which direction was the person who you mentioned was firing facing?

A: The person was facing towards Philadelphia.

Q: How close was the person to let us say the church as opposed to the curb or the street?

A: The person was standing almost directly on the curb.

Q: And did you see where that person was firing?

A: He was firing at an object on the sidewalk in front of him.

Q: Did you see that object ?

A: Only the form.

Q: Could you identify the form in any way.

A: No I could not.

Q: Do you know if it was a man or a woman?

A: I would say it was a man.

Q: Was the form standing, sitting, lying how?

A: The form was lying across the sidewalk and seemed to be crouched or doubled over.

Q: Where was that form in the same terms with relationship to the side of the church and let us say the curb?

A: He was laying directly across the sidewalk. I couldn't say whether he was closer to the church or the curb.

Q: Did you see any effect from the firing?

A: No I didn't see any of the firing hit him.

Q: Did you see it hit anything or anywhere?

A: Yes I did, I did see the sparks jumping up from the sidewalk.

Q: In front or behind or to the side of the form, if you know?

A: They were in front of the form.

Q: Did you see anyone else between you and the person who was firing?

A: No I didn't.

Q: Did you see anyone else on the sidewalk between the person who was firing and the form?

A: No I did not.

Q: Did you see anyone else on the sidewalk at all?

A: No.

Q: But you were with other person who were on the sidewalk, is that correct?

A: Yes I was with two other persons.

Q: And you answers is I assume ah have been with the exception of of course these two other person?

A: Yes.



Q: Did you observe any cars parked along the side of the church in the street, any traffic in the street or any persons in the street?

A: I believe there were cars parked at the curb but I don't remember seeing any other traffic.

Q: Is this to say there was none or that you simply did not observe any?

A: Only to say that I did not observe any.

Q: And how many shots if you can estimate did you hear or see fired?

A: I would estimate four or five shots.

Q: Do you know the type of weapon the person was firing?

A: No.

Q: Was it a pistol or did you mention a rifle?

A: It was a rifle.

Q: Can you give me in terms of whatever noise deem to be appropriate the sequence of the shots as you recollect them?

A: I would say, crack-crack-crack and a pause and crack-crack.

Q: Did anything occur during that which you have labelled a pause?

A: The person firing turned facing myself and the two other persons as we came out of the door and then he turned back and fired once or twice again.

Q: So you had an opportunity to observe this person?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you give me a description of that person?

A: Only that he seemed to be short for a man, I'd say about 5'5", he had on a green uniform with a white belt, that's about all.

Q: Can you describe him as to race?

A: He was black.

Q: Can you describe him as to his complexion?

A: Brown-skinned, dark or medium brown-skinned.

Q: Was he wearing a hat?

A: I can't remember.

Q: Can you give anything else in terms of his description and by that I mean glasses, mustache, things of that nature?

A: No I can't.

Q: Is there any particular reason that you can give to account for your inability to give any greater detailed description of the gentleman?

A: Only that I was surprised to hear the firing when I came out the side door.

Q: After the firing occurred, what did you do?

A: I think

FIRST SIDE OF TAPE ENDS

THIS IS A CONTINUATION ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE REAL

Q: The question as I recollect was what did you do after the firing and you began think?

A: I think I paused a few moments with Gratton and Choka and then Gratton pulled me off to the side in the back of the church.

Q: How were you dressed on that night by the way?

A: I had a brown knit dress on, boots, and brown jacket.

Q: How was Mr. Gratton dressed, if you recall?

A: Mr. Gratton had on a dark gray jacket, dark pants and I don't remember his shirt--a pullover.

Q: How was Choka dressed?

A: Choka had on a green uniform and white belt.

Q: How was the shooter dressed?

A: In the green uniform, white belt and boots with white laces.

Q: Do you know if Choka had white laces or not?

A: I don't recall.

Q: Was there any particular reason for your mentioning the white laces?

A: I remember the white laces and the white belt on the uniform being outstanding.



Q: And where did you go when Gratton pulled you away?

A: We went to the back of the church and crouched between two vehicles parked there.

Q: With reference to the diagram that we have here could you give us some description of approximately how the vehicles were parked?

A: They were parked directly behind one another with some space in between.

Q: And this is at the rear of the church?

A: Yes it would be.

Q: Based upon the diagram before us would that appear to be as if it were on the property of the Clark Gas Station?

A: Yes I think they would be on the property of the Clark station.

Q: Were the car parked parallel to Linwood or perpendicular to Linwood?

A: They were parked perpendicular to Linwood.

Q: How close were the cars to the sidewalk on Linwood?

A: The car, the car in front was parked almost at the sidewalk on the lawn.

Q: And the other car was parked directly behind it?

A: Yes it was.

Q: I'm sorry what did you say you did with reference to those cars?

A: We crouched between the first two cars.

Q: How much space was there between the two cars?

A: I'd say about two feet.

Q: Do you remember or are you able to describe these vehicles?

A: No I'm not.

Q: Where were you with relationship to Gratton and Choka?

A: I was on the outside directly facing the Clark Station parking lot, Gratton was behind me and Choka I believe was to the side and slightly behind Gratton.

Q: In other words these two brave heroes placed you in front?

- A: They placed out of the line of fire.
- Q: Alright and what happened next?
- A: Gratton told Choka to get away from us so as not to draw any attention to Gratton and I.
- Q: Why was that if you know?
- A: Because of the uniform I believe.
- Q: And what did Choka at that point do?
- A: Choka then ran toward the back of the church.
- Q: Could you tell in what direction he was running?
- A: Only that he didn't run back out to Linwood he ran in the opposite direction.
- Q: And what did you do?
- A: Gratton and I crouched a few moments longer I don't know the exact time and then he told me to come and we were going into the gas station.
- Q: And did you go into the gas station?
- A: Yes we did.
- Q: By gas station what do you mean?
- A: Into the Clark service station, the inside inner building.
- Q: Did you walk over there?
- A: Yes we did.
- Q: Do you recall hearing shooting during any of this time period?
- A: As we got up to run I recall hearing shots that sounded as though they came from the front of the church.
- Q: Were there people inside the gas station building?
- A: Yes there were.
- Q: What did you do there?
- A: We stood in the gas station.
- Q: For how long were you there?
- A: I believe we were there about 15 minutes.
- Q: Were people entering and leaving the building or not?



A: Yes, several other people came into the service station  
I guess to get away from the shooting.

Q: Can you describe any of these people?

A: I remember a plainclothes policeman came in and made a call to the police station. A woman came in and at least two other men came in along with the owner of the gas station I think.

Q: How did you leave the area?

A: We left the area in a taxi.

Q: Did you see police arrive on the scene?

A: Yes I did.

Q: Where could you fit that into the general time sequence you've given us?

A: I was say I was in the service station about two minutes before I saw several police cars.

Q: Where did you see them please?

A: Primarily on Linwood?

Q: Can you give just a general description of some of the activity around you as you were in the building for this period you have estimated to have been about 15 minutes?

A: I noticed that several police cars and I noticed police running across the Clark station lot mostly with their guns drawn. I do remember them running from the side of the service station and running toward Linwood. I also heard some shooting which seemed to come from Linwood or to my right.

Q: To your right when you face Linwood?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you know who was doing the shooting

A: No.

Q: Where did you go after you left the service station?

A: After we left the service station we went directly to the 20 Grand Motel.

Q: And what did you do there?

A: At that time Wilbur Gratton and I went to the room of Baxter Hill.

Q: How long did you remain in Detroit?

A: Until late Sunday afternoon.

Q: Did you go to Court Sunday morning?

A: Yes we did.

Q: Are you now a member of the Republic of New Africa?

A: No I am not.

Q: Are you a member of any formal political organizations?

A: I am or was a member of the July 23rd Defense Committee.

Q: Anything else?

A: No.

Q: Would you have any reason to lie on behalf of Choka?

A: No.

Q: Are you one hundred per cent certain that he did not fire on that street that night?

A: Yes I am.

Q: Do you know whether or not he had a weapon?

A: I don't recall.

Q: Are you willing to submit yourself to a lie detector or polygraph test?

A: Yes I am.

Q: Are you willing to come back and testify at trial?

A: Yes.

Q: To whatever extent one can be fair about these things would you say that the method of my questioning you has been open, honest and fair?

A: Yes, I would say it has been open and fair.

Q: Has anyone at any time told you what to say?

A: No they havn't.

Q: You've stated everything honestly to me?

A: To the best of my knowledge, yes.

Q: Fine, thank you that is the conclusion of this tape is that right Miss Zanders?

A: Yes it is.