

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
AND  
PRIVACY ACTS**

**SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE**

**PART:1 OF 4**

**FILE NUMBER:HQ 157-2466**



**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**  
**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION**  
**COVER SHEET**

**SUBJECT:**

**DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE**

**PART 1 OF 4**

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U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D. C. 20535

Subject of Request: **Deacons for Defense and Justice**

FOIPA NO.

Dear Requester:

Enclosed are copies of documents from FBI records. Excisions have been made to protect information exempt from disclosure pursuant to Title 5, United States Code, Section 552 (Freedom of Information Act) and/or Section 552a (Privacy Act). In addition, where excisions were made, the appropriate exempting subsections have been cited opposite the deletions. Where pages have been withheld in their entirety, a deleted page information sheet has been substituted showing the reasons or basis for the deletion. The subsections cited for withholding information from the enclosed documents are marked below:

Section 552	Section 552a	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (b)(1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(7)(A)	<input type="checkbox"/> (d)(5)
<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(7)(B)	<input type="checkbox"/> (j)(2)
<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (b)(7)(C)	<input type="checkbox"/> (k)(1)
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<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(6)	<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(7)(F)	<input type="checkbox"/> (k)(4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(8)	<input type="checkbox"/> (k)(5)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (b)(9)	<input type="checkbox"/> (k)(6)
		<input type="checkbox"/> (k)(7)

(See Form OPCA-16a, enclosed, for an explanation of these exemptions.)

Pursuant to your request, **1580** preprocessed pages are being released.

The documents responsive to your request were previously processed for another requester. In order to provide the information you requested as soon as possible, we have released the FBI information as it was originally processed. We have not contacted other government agencies concerning their information in FBI files.

Domestic Intelligence Division

INFORMATIVE NOTE

Date 1-6-65

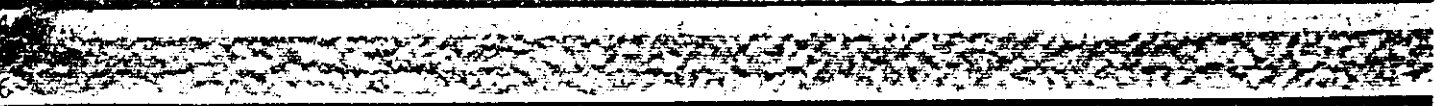
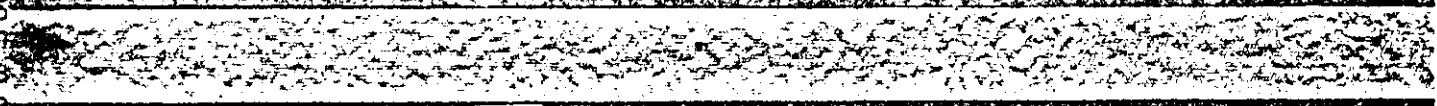
We are disseminating this information to the Civil Rights Division of the Department.

AJD

*WCS*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP18L/AV

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# DECODED COPY

- Mohr
- DeLoach
- Casper
- Callahan
- Conrad
- Felt
- Gale
- Rosen
- Sullivan
- Tavel
- Trotter
- Tele. Room
- Holmes
- Gandy

AIRGRAM     CABLEGRAM     RADIO     TELETYPE

R-75  
 URGENT 1-6-65  
 TO DIRECTOR  
 FROM NEW ORLEANS 061952

*Handwritten notes and signatures:*  
 P...  
 SEP  
 [Signature]  
 [Signature]

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, JONESBORO LOUISIANA, PERCY  
 LET BRADFORD, PRESIDENT, RE. RACIAL MATTER

[REDACTED] JONESBORO  
 LOUISIANA ADVISED THAT CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN ORGANIZED  
 IN JACKSON PARISH AT JONESBORO LOUISIANA AND THAT IT  
 HAS FOR ITS PURPOSES MUCH THE SAME AS THOSE OF THE CONGRESS OF  
 RACIAL EQUALITY (CORE) BUT THAT CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION IS  
 MORE MILITANT THAN CORE AND THAT IT WOULD BE MORE INCLINED  
 TO USE VIOLENCE IN DEALING WITH ANY VIOLENT OPPOSITION  
 ENCOUNTERED IN CIVIL RIGHTS MATTERS. CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION  
 HAS NIGHT PATROLS IN THE NEGRO SECTIONS OF JONESBORO AND [REDACTED]  
 BELIEVES THAT THESE NIGHT PATROLS ARE ARMED.

b7C  
 b7D

LETTER FOLLOWS.  
 Letter head MCHD  
 RECEIVED: 3:57 PM RDR

MCT-21 / 2466-1

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 DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [Signature]

2 JAN 12 1965

*Handwritten signature:*  
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F B I

Date: 1/6/65

REC 8  
1/22

Mr. Belmont	_____
Mr. Mohr	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Casper	_____
Mr. Callahan	_____
Mr. Conrad	_____
Mr. Felt	_____
Mr. Gale	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Sullivan	_____
Mr. Tavel	_____
Mr. Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Miss Holmes	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

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

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (157-New)

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-New)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE OF JUSTICE,  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA,  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD, PRESIDENT  
RM

*Handwritten notes:*  
to 3  
J  
TAPK  
sub con  
inf

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight (8) copies  
of LHM re captioned matter.

③ - Bureau (Enc. 8)  
2 - New Orleans  
EC/med  
(5)

REC 8

*Handwritten:* 157-2466-2

JAN 12 1965

Agency G-2, ONI, OSI, CRD, SS, CAS

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Date Forw. JAN 8 1965

DATE 7-16-80 BY SPI gsh/88

How Forw. B-5

By abb-med

/ Room 828 RB

*Handwritten signature:* [Signature]

Approved: *[Signature]*  
Special Agent in Charge

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

JAN 18 1965



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

New Orleans, Louisiana  
January 6, 1964

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE OF JUSTICE,  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA,  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD, PRESIDENT

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Jonesboro, Louisiana, advised January 5, 1965 that an organization known as Deacons for Defense of Justice, with Percy Lee Bradford, Negro male, age about 44, as president, has been organized at Jonesboro, Louisiana. He stated that this organization was organized to promote Negroes' civil rights and that its purposes were much the same as those of CORE. He stated that whereas CORE is completely non-violent in its methods of dealing with civil rights matters, Deacons for Defense of Justice would be more militant and inclined to use violence in dealing with any violent opposition encountered. He stated that Deacons for Defense of Justice has night patrols in the Negro sections of Jonesboro and he feels that these night patrols are armed.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] advised this organization was a non-violent Negro movement organized exclusively within Jackson Parish, Louisiana. He stated its purpose was to promote justice for the Negro and followed the same principals as laid down by the CORE except its members would, if attacked, defend themselves by use of force.

He said this organization has two citizens band radios and walkie talkies used to communicate with one another in case violence against the Negro is initiated in Jackson Parish. He said there was between 250 and 300 members within the parish and they

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DATE 7-16-80 BY SP12/af

ENCLOSURE 157-146-2

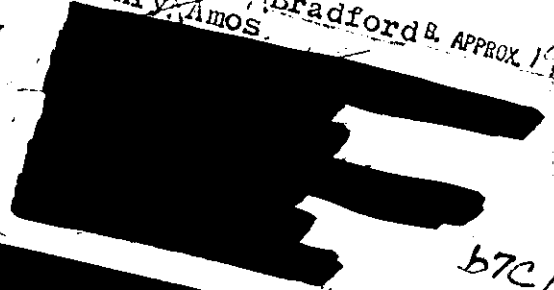


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did not carry arms at any time. He advised the following individuals were leaders of the Deacons for Defense of Justice:

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Finance Secretary  
Group Leaders

Percy Lee  
Henry Amos  
Bradford B. APPROX. 1970



b7c

and [redacted] advised January 6, 1965 that they were aware of Negro patrols in the Jonesboro area but that no incidents had arisen from those patrols.

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.

FEB 23 1965

TELETYPE

157-2466

491

*Handwritten notes and signatures:*  
B  
P. Sullivan  
C. [unclear]

Mr. Tolson	
Mr. Belmont	
Mr. Mohr	
Mr. DeLoach	
Mr. Casper	
Mr. Callahan	
Mr. Conrad	
Mr. Felt	
Mr. Gale	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Sullivan	
Mr. Tavel	
Mr. Trotter	
Tele. Room	
Miss Holmes	
Miss Gandy	

FBI WASH DC

FBI WASH DC

FBI NEW ORLS

8:46 PM CST URGENT 2-23-65 RJS

TO DIRECTOR  
FROM NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, PERCY

BRADFORD; RM.

[REDACTED]

ADVISED FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING CAPTIONED MATTER:

[REDACTED] STATED THAT IT WAS LEARNED THAT ON THE NIGHT OF  
FEBRUARY TWENTY ONE, LAST, SIX CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY,

PAREN CORE END PAREN, MEMBERS APPEARED AT BOGALUSA, AT  
WHICH TIME THEY HELD A MEETING AT THE NEGROES LABOR HALL. THIS  
MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL BOGALUSA NEGRO LEADERS,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

END PAGE ONE

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DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [unclear]

67 MAR 3 1965

*Handwritten notes:*  
Memo to Sullivan  
SF P/Bao  
2/23/65  
2/24/65

*Handwritten notes:*  
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5 MAR 3 1965

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*Handwritten initials:*  
J. [unclear]  
B. [unclear]

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PAGE TWO

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS  
TO DISCUSS AN ORGANIZATION NOW BEING PUT TOGETHER IN LOUISIANA  
KNOWN AS THE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE. PAREN DDJ END PAREN.  
THE MAIN SPEAKER OF THE EVENING WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN ERNEST THOMAS  
WHO DISCUSSED THE FACT THAT MEMBERSHIP IN THE DDJ, PAREN STRICTLY  
NEGRO END PAREN, WOULD COST TEN DOLLARS INITIATION FEE  
AND TWO DOLLARS PER MONTH. TEN PERCENT OF THE MONIES OBTAINED  
FROM THE LOCAL CHAPTERS WOULD BE CHANELLED INTO THE HEADQUARTERS OF  
THE STATE ORGANIZATION WHICH IS NOW BELIEVED TO BE AT JONESBORO,  
LOUISIANA.

IT WAS EXPLAINED, THE PURPOSE OF THE MONEY WAS TO BUY  
RADIO EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING WALKY DASH TALKIES, CITIZENS BAND  
EQUIPMENT, FOR AUTOMOBILES, AS WELL AS AMMUNITION, LITERATURE,  
AND OTHER EQUIPMENT NOT IDENTIFIED. DISCUSSED IN CONSIDERABLE  
LENGTH WAS THE PUTTING OF MOBIL CITIZENS BAND RADIOS INTO AUTOMOBILES

END PAGE TWO

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10 PAGE THREE

11  
12 OF NEGRO MEMBERS, PRINCIPALLY IN BOGALUSA. IT WAS REPORTED THAT  
13  
14 THOMAS WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THE DDJ INTENDED TO ESTABLISH A CODE  
15  
16 SYSTEM WHEREBY A STATE WIDE COMMUNICATIONS SET UP COULD BE CREATED,  
17  
18 IN ORDER THAT, IF NEGROES IN ONE COMMUNITY HAVE DIFFICULTY, THE

19  
20  
21  
22 B  
23  
24 NEGROES COULD IMMEDIATELY CALL ON THE RADIO FOR ASSISTANCE AND GET  
25  
26 ASSISTANCE. THOMAS TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT THE USE AND ADVANTAGES  
27  
28 OF WALKIE DASH TALKIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR COMMUNICATION PURPOSES.

29  
30 THOMAS THEN DISCUSSED A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF NEGROES  
31  
32 TO BUY CHEAP WEAPONS LIKE A TWENTY TWO CALIBER. THOMAS POINTED  
33  
34 OUT THAT NEGROES SHOULD BUY SUBSTANTIAL WEAPONS INCLUDING A THREE  
35  
36 ZERO SIX CALIBER RIFLE. THOMAS SUGGESTED THAT TWELVE OR SIXTEEN  
37  
38 GAGE SHOTGUNS WERE GOOD FOR QUOTE CLOSE IN WORK UNQUOTE. THOMAS  
39  
40 SAID THAT IF STANDARDIZED GAGES WERE OBTAINED THE NEGROES IN  
41  
42 COMMUNITIES COULD BUY SHELLS BY THE CASE. THOMAS SAID THAT  
43  
44 NEGROES SHOULD KEEP PLENTY OF AMMUNITION IN THEIR CARS, IN  
45  
46 THEIR HOMES, AS THEY NEVER KNEW WHEN THEY WOULD NEED THE AMMUNITION  
47  
48 AND THEY WERE TO BE EXPECTED TO BE READY

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50 END PAGE THREE  
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12 PAGE FOUR

13 WHENEVER THEY WERE CALLED UPON.

14  
15 THOMAS SAID THAT HIS GROUP HAS CONTACTS IN CHICAGO AND  
16  
17 HOUSTON FOR AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND MENTIONED A FIFTY CALIBER AND  
18  
19 FIFTY CALIBER MACHINE GUN.

20  
21 THOMAS STATED, REFERRING TO THE KU KLUX-KLAN AND WHITE  
22  
23 PEOPLE GENERALLY, THAT IF KKK OR WHITE PEOPLE WANTED VIOLENCE, THAT  
24  
25 QUOTE THEY INTENDED TO COMBAT VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE; THAT THEY  
26  
27 HAD NO INTENTION OF STARTING ANYTHING THEMSELVES BUT WANTED TO BE  
28  
29 READY UNQUOTE.

30  
31 THOMAS DISCUSSED AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH THE ADVANTAGES OF  
32  
33 HAVING ROVING PATROLS IN THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES SO THAT  
34  
35 SHOULD ANY NEGRO BE ARRESTED BY A POLICE OFFICER, THAT THE  
36  
37 ROVING PATROL AS WITNESSES TO ANY ARREST, COULD IMMEDIATELY  
38  
39 DEFEND THE POSITION OF THE ARRESTED PERSON. THOMAS SAID THAT IF  
40  
41 POLICE OFFICERS SEE NEGROES WHO ARE ARMED AS THE POLICE ARE,  
42  
43 THE POLICE COULD BE EXPECTED TO PROBABLY BACK AWAY AND NOT AFFECT  
44  
45 THE ARREST OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

46  
47 THOMAS DISCUSSED THE NEED FOR MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP, IF  
48  
49 THEY SHOULD JOIN, TO GET TOGETHER WITH THEIR NEGRO LEADERS, THE  
50  
51 PREACHERS, SCHOOL TEACHERS, AND OTHER RESPONSIBLE PERSONS, AND  
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53 END PAGE FOUR

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8 PAGE FIVE

9  
10 REACH TO AND EMPHASIZE TO THESE LEADER THAT IF THESE LEADERS  
11  
12 DO NOT GO ALONG WITH THIS ACTIVITY THAT THEY WERE NOT FIT IN THE  
13  
14 FIRST PLACE. THOMAS POINTED OUT IF THE LOCAL MEMBERS IF THE DDJ  
15  
16 WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL IN WORKING ON NEGRO LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY  
17  
18 AND CONVINCING THEM THAT THEY, REFERRING TO CORE, WOULD DO IT  
19  
20 FOR THEM.

21  
22 A FURTHER MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE DDJ IS SCHEDULED AT BOGALUSA  
23  
24 ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY TWENTY EIGHT, SIXTY FIVE, AND ALL PROSPECTIVE  
25  
26 MEMBERS WERE REQUESTED TO BRING MONEY, DUES, AND INITIATION FEES.

27  
28 [REDACTED] ADVISED THAT BASED UPON THIS INFORMATION b7C  
b7D  
29  
30 THE BOGALUSA CITY ADMINISTRATION FELT THAT THE DDJ WOULD NOT  
31  
32 BE TOO SUCCESSFUL FROM THE STAND POINT OF MEMBERSHIP AND DUES  
33  
34 BUT WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES DISCUSSIONS OF THIS  
35  
36 TYPE WOULD HAVE AMONG THE NEGRO POPULATION IN THE BOGALUSA COMMUNITY.

37  
38 ON THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY TWENTY TWO, SIXTYFIVE, IT WAS REPORTED  
39  
40 THAT ROBERT HICKS, A NEGRO LEADER IN BOGALUSA AND ACTIVE IN  
41  
42 CORE WORK SPOKE BEFORE THE BOGALUSA VOTERS LEAGUE AT A  
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44 END PAGE FIVE  
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8 MEETING CALLED TO LEND SUPPORT TO THE BOGALUSA NEGRO  
9  
10 COMMUNITIES COOPERATION WITH THE CITY ADMINISTRATION. HICKS  
11  
12 DISCUSSED AT GREAT LENGTH THE DDJ INFORMATION AS  
13  
14 DISCUSSED THE PREVIOUS EVENING BY ERNEST THOMAS. HICKS POINTED  
15  
16 OUT TO THE PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE WHO WERE MOSTLY TEENAGE CHILDREN,  
17  
18 THE ADVANTAGES OF ARMING THEMSELVES AND DISCUSSED HAND GRENADES,  
19  
20 WALKIE DASH TALKIES, AND EXPLAINED GENERALLY WHAT WAS  
21  
22 STATED THE PREVIOUS NIGHT BY ERNEST THOMAS.

23  
24 HICKS WENT INTO GREAT DETAIL CONCERNING HOW YOUNG NEGROES  
25  
26 COULD DEFEND THEMSELVES BY CONVERGING ON POLICE OFFICERS IF THE  
27  
28 POLICE WERE TRYING TO ARREST NEGROES AND CAUSE DIFFICULTY AT  
29  
30 THE TIME OF THE ARREST AND PREVENT THE NEGRO FROM BEING  
31  
32 ARRESTED.

33  
34 SECRET SERVICE, NEW ORLEANS, AND INTELLIGENCE CORPS GROUP,  
35  
36 NEW ORLEANS, ARE BEING ADVISED. LHM FOLLOWS.  
37  
38 END.

39  
40 ~~CORR PAGE TWO LINE THREE WORD EIGHT SHD BE UNIDENTIFIED~~

41  
42 ~~PAGE THREE LINE FIVE OMIT LETTERS FB~~

43  
44 ~~PAGE THREE LINE NINE WORD SHD BE DISCUSSED~~

45  
46 ~~PAGE FOUR LINE NINETEEN WORD THREE SHD BE JOIN~~

47  
48 END AND ACK PLS

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50 WA..RPP

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52 FBI WASH DC

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FBI

Date: 2/24/65

Mr. Mohr	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Casper	_____
Mr. Callahan	_____
Mr. Conrad	_____
Mr. Felt	_____
Mr. Gale	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Sullivan	_____
Mr. Tavel	_____
Mr. Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Miss Holmes	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_

(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, PERCY LEE BRADFORD RM

*Handwritten signatures and initials:*  
 S. Corbin  
 J. B. [unclear]  
 J. B. [unclear]

Enclosed herewith for the Bureau are eight copies of letterhead memorandum concerning captioned matter, two copies for Houston, and two copies for Chicago. Copies have also been forwarded to ICG and Secret Service, New Orleans.

Source mentioned in letterhead memorandum is [REDACTED]

CHICAGO AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Through established sources, informants, and gun outlets, determine whether or not any shipments of guns are being made to the Jonesboro, Bogalusa, or New Orleans area.

HOUSTON DIVISION AT HOUSTON, TEXAS

Cover same lead as set forth for Chicago Division.

ENCLOSURE

- 3 - Bureau (Enc. 8)
- 2 - Houston (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Chicago (Enc. 2)
- 2 - New Orleans (1 - 157-3290) (1 - 173-201)

JTS/mrk  
(9)

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

1 cc dated by 7-16-82 BY SP1/SL/fe  
Klan-Info Group Unit

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER  
DEPT ISD, CRD

DATE FORW: 2-1-65  
HOW FORW: routing slip  
BY: [unclear]

E. L. WICK

REC-28

157-3290-4

Approved: [Signature] Special Agent in Charge

Sent \_\_\_\_\_

MAR 3 1965  
M Per \_\_\_\_\_





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to

File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana  
February 24, 1965

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE  
AND JUSTICE

On February 22, 1965, a confidential source advised the following information concerning the captioned matter:

Source stated that it was learned that on the night of February 21, 1965, six Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE) members appeared at Bogalusa, at which time they held a meeting at the Negroes Labor Hall. This meeting was attended by several Bogalusa Negro leaders,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Source reported the main purpose of the meeting was to discuss an organization now being put together in Louisiana known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ). The main speaker of the evening was believed to have been Ernest Thomas who discussed the fact that membership in the DDJ (strictly Negro) would cost \$10 initiation fee and \$2 per month. Ten per cent of the monies obtained from the local chapters would be channelled into the headquarters of the state organization which is now believed to be at Jonesboro, Louisiana.

It was explained the purpose of the money was to buy radio equipment, including walkie-talkies, citizens band equipment for automobiles, as well as ammunition, literature, and other equipment not identified. Discussed in considerable length was the putting of mobile citizens band radios into

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-88 BY SP1 gsd/lhr

ENCLOSURE

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10 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
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12  
13 automobiles of Negro members, principally in Bogalusa. It was  
14 reported that Thomas went on to explain the DDJ intended to  
15 establish a code system whereby a state-wide communications set  
16 up could be created in order that, if Negroes in one community  
17 have difficulty, the Negroes could immediately call on the radio  
18 for assistance and get assistance. Thomas talked at length  
19 about the use and advantages of walkie-talkies and equipment  
20 for communication purposes.

21  
22 Thomas then discussed a tendency on the part of  
23 Negroes to buy cheap weapons like a .22 caliber. Thomas  
24 pointed out that Negroes should buy substantial weapons,  
25 including a .306 caliber rifle. Thomas suggested that 12 or  
26 16 gage shotguns were good for "close in work." Thomas said  
27 that if standardized gages were obtained, the Negroes in  
28 communities could buy shells by the case. Thomas said that  
29 Negroes should keep plenty of ammunition in their cars, in  
30 their homes, as they never knew when they would need the  
31 ammunition, and they were to be expected to be ready whenever  
32 they were called upon.

33  
34 Thomas said that his group has contacts in Chicago  
35 and Houston for automatic weapons and mentioned a .50 caliber  
36 and .30 caliber machine gun.

37  
38 Thomas stated, referring to the Ku Klux Klan and  
39 white people generally, that if the Ku Klux Klan or white  
40 people wanted violence, that "they intended to combat violence  
41 with violence; that they had no intention of starting anything  
42 themselves but wanted to be ready."  
43

44 Thomas discussed at considerable length the advantages  
45 of having roving Negro patrols in the various communities so  
46 that should any Negro be arrested by a police officer, that the  
47 roving patrol, as witnesses to any arrest, could immediately  
48 defend the position of the arrested person. Thomas said that  
49 if police officers see Negroes who are armed as the police are,  
50 the police could be expected to probably back away and not  
51 affect the arrest of the individual.

52  
53 Thomas discussed the need for members of this group,  
54 if they should join, to get together with their Negro leaders,  
55 the preachers, school teachers, and other responsible persons,  
56 and preach to and emphasize to their leaders that if their  
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11 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
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13 leaders do not go along with this activity, that they were not  
14 fit in the first place. Thomas pointed out if the local members  
15 of the DDJ were not successful in working on Negro leaders in  
16 the community and convincing them that they, referring to CORE,  
17 would do it for them.  
18

19 A further membership meeting of the DDJ is scheduled  
20 at Bogalusa on Sunday, February 28, 1965, and all prospective  
21 members were requested to bring money, dues, and initiation  
22 fees.  
23

24 Source advised that based upon this information, the  
25 Bogalusa City Administration felt that the DDJ would not be  
26 too successful from the stand point of membership and dues but  
27 were concerned about the difficulties discussions of this type  
28 would have among the Negro population in the Bogalusa community.  
29

30 On the night of February 22, 1965, it was reported  
31 that Robert Hicks, a Negro leader in Bogalusa and active in  
32 CORE work, spoke before the Bogalusa Voters League at a meeting  
33 called to lend support to the Bogalusa Negro Communities  
34 Cooperation with the City Administration. Hicks discussed  
35 at great length the DDJ information as discussed the previous  
36 evening by Ernest Thomas. Hicks pointed out to the people  
37 in attendance, who were mostly teenage children, the advantages  
38 of arming themselves and discussed hand grenades, walkie-  
39 talkies, and explained generally what was stated the previous  
40 night by Ernest Thomas.  
41

42 Hicks went into great detail concerning how young  
43 Negroes could defend themselves by converging on police officers  
44 if the police were trying to arrest Negroes and cause difficulty  
45 at the time of the arrest and prevent the Negro from being  
46 arrested.  
47  
48  
49  
50

51 This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions  
52 of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your  
53 agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside  
54 your agency.  
55

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

- Tolson
- Belmont
- Mohr
- DeLoach
- Casper
- Callahan
- Conrad
- Evans
- Gale
- Rosen
- Sullivan
- Tavel
- Trotter
- Tele. Room
- Holmes
- Gandy

- 1 - Belmont
- 1 - McGowan
- 1 - Sullivan

W. C. Sullivan

DATE: 2-26-65

FROM:

F. J. Baumgardner

- 1 - Baumgardner
- 1 - Trainor
- 1 - Gray
- 1 - Martin
- 1 - Phillips

SUBJECT:

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
INFORMATION CONCERNING  
(INTERNAL SECURITY)

This is an informative memorandum to report information obtained from [redacted] and two sources in that city concerning steps presently under way to organize the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ). At a meeting held at Bogalusa 2-21-65 which was for the purpose of discussing the initiation of the DDJ, several local Negro leaders were present including some members of the Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE). One Ernest Thomas did most of the talking and explained the collection of initiation fees and dues, which monies would be used to purchase radio equipment, walkie-talkies, literature and ammunition. Thomas discussed the types of weapons which Negroes should purchase and said the group had contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons. The general tenor of Thomas' talk was that Negroes should arm themselves, not only for defensive reasons, but that they should have roving patrols so that if a Negro was being arrested by a police officer, other Negroes could come to the aid of the arrested person. Thomas said that if the Ku Klux Klan and white people generally wanted violence, they "intended to combat violence with violence."

[redacted] advised that upon information available the Bogalusa City Administration felt that the DDJ would not be too successful from the standpoint of membership and dues, but were concerned about the difficulties discussions of the type referred to above would have among the local Negro population

On 2-22-65 Robert Hicks, a Bogalusa Negro leader active in CORE, spoke before the Bogalusa Voters' League. He discussed Thomas' remarks of the previous evening before the DDJ and pointed out to those in attendance, most of whom were teenagers, the advantages of arming themselves. Hicks went into detail concerning how young Negroes could defend themselves by converging on police officers at the time the arrest of a Negro is being made.

157-2466

REC-33

157-2466-5

CONTINUED - OVER

5 MAR 3 1965

SFP:pdb  
(9)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 BJA/jk

INT. SEC.

66 MAR 10 1965

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6 Memorandum to Mr. Sullivan  
7 Re: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
8 157-2466  
9  
10

11 ACTION:

12  
13 We have instructed the New Orleans Office to immediately  
14 initiate an intensive investigation of the DDJ because of the  
15 potential for violence indicated. New Orleans has been instructed  
16 to be alert for indications of subversive and/or outside influence;  
17 to be alert to any spread of the organization even though it now  
18 appears to be confined locally; and to set out leads for other  
19 offices promptly. They have been instructed to develop necessary  
20 sources and run out the allegation that the group has contacts in  
21 Chicago and Houston for weapons. Dissemination has already been  
22 made to Secret Service and the military intelligence at New Orleans;  
23 we are disseminating to the Department, Secret Service and the  
24 intelligence community in Washington, D. C.  
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2/26/65

- 1 - Mr. McGowan
- 1 - Mr. Baumgardner
- 1 - Mr. Trainor
- 1 - Mr. Gray
- 1 - Mr. Martin
- 1 - Mr. Phillips

AIRTEL

To: SAC, New Orleans (157-3290)

From: Director, FBI (157-2466)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
INFORMATION CONCERNING  
(Internal Security)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gdl/jk

Reurtel 2/23/65 which reported information obtained from [redacted] concerning steps presently underway to organize the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ). A meeting was held 2/21/65 at Bogalusa with several Negro leaders present, including some members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Purpose of meeting was to discuss an organization being initiated in Louisiana known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice. One Ernest Thomas did most of the talking and explained the collection of initiation fees and dues, which moneys would be used to purchase radio equipment, walkie-talkies, literature and ammunition. Thomas discussed the types of weapons which Negroes should purchase and urged that they possess plenty of ammunition. He said his group had contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons.

The general tenor of Thomas' talk was that Negroes should arm themselves, not only for defensive reasons, but that they should have roving patrols so that if a Negro was being arrested by a police officer, other Negroes could come to the aid of the arrested person. Thomas said that if the Ku Klux Klan and white people generally wanted violence they "intended to combat violence with violence."

[redacted] advised that based upon information available, the Bogalusa City Administration felt that the DDJ would not be too successful from the standpoint of membership and dues, but were concerned about the difficulties

SFP:kaq  
(9)

REC-120

157-2466-6  
18 MAR 5 1965

MAR 3 1965

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

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b7d

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6 AIRTEL to SAC, New Orleans  
7 RE: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
8 157-2466  
9

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11  
12 discussions of the type referred to above would have among the  
13 local Negro population.  
14

15 On 2/22/65 Robert Hicks, a Bogalusa Negro leader active  
16 in CORE, spoke before the Bogalusa Voters' League. He discussed  
17 Thomas' remarks of the previous evening before the DDJ and pointed  
18 out to the people in attendance, who were mostly teenage children,  
19 the advantages of arming themselves. Hicks went into detail concern-  
20 ing how young Negroes could defend themselves by converging on  
21 police officers at the time the arrest of a Negro is being made.  
22

23 Bufiles reflect the only information available concerning  
24 the DDJ is that contained in your radiogram 1/6/65 and follow-up  
25 airtel and letterhead memorandum (LHM) 1/6/65 which reported on  
26 information obtained from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
27 [REDACTED] concerning the initiation of this new organization. Percy Lee  
28 Bradford, identified as President of the DDJ in your 1/6/65  
29 communications, is probably identical to the individual by the same  
30 name who is a victim in recent investigations by your office under  
31 the character "Public Accommodations, Civil Rights Act of 1964",  
32 [REDACTED] b  
33 [REDACTED] b

34 There is no indication in communications submitted to  
35 date by your office that any investigation of captioned group is  
36 being initiated and it appears that the only sources from whom  
37 information has been received to date is [REDACTED]  
38 [REDACTED] and the two individuals mentioned in the 1/6/65  
39 LHM. Because of the potential for violence indicated, you are  
40 instructed to immediately initiate an investigation of the DDJ.  
41 Be alert for any indications of subversive and/or outside influence.  
42 Although it appears that the DDJ is confined locally, be alert to  
43 any spread of the organization and set out leads for investigation  
44 by other offices promptly. Develop information concerning the  
45 allegation of Thomas that his group has contacts in Chicago and  
46 Houston for automatic weapons. Intensify efforts to develop  
47 sources relative to the DDJ and be alert to the possibility of  
48 discouraging illegal arming and illegal acts by the group through  
49 interviews.  
50

51 Expedite submission of LHM containing information in  
52 retel. It is noted that Secret Service, New Orleans, and Intelli-  
53 gence Corps Group, New Orleans, are being advised. Insure prompt  
54 local dissemination of all pertinent information as developed.  
55

5  
6 AIRTEL to SAC, New Orleans  
7 RE: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
8 157-2466  
9

11 The Bureau must be kept promptly advised of all  
12 developments relative to the DDJ and information suitable for  
13 dissemination should be promptly submitted by LHM.  
14

15 It is noted that retel contained no reference to any  
16 prior communications whereas the information obviously tied in  
17 with your 1/6/65 communications. Failure to include appropriate  
18 reference, as required, results in an administrative burden at  
19 the Seat of Government. Remind responsible personnel concerning  
20 this matter.  
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F B I

Date: 2/26/65

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_

(Type in plain text or code)

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE-  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD  
RM

3  
*skw*

Re New Orleans teletype, 2/23/65 and New Orleans airtel, 2/24/65.

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight copies of a letterhead memorandum concerning captioned matter.

Enclosed for Chicago and Houston is one copy of above.

Copies furnished ICG and Secret Service, New Orleans

- 3-Bureau (Encls.8)
- 1-Chicago (Encl.1) (Info)
- 1-Houston (Encl.1) (Info)
- 3-New Orleans (1-157-3290)
- (1-173-201)
- (1-157-3534)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP/8K/ff

FAS:cj01 cc detached by  
(S) Klan-Hate Group Unit

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER

DEPT ISD, CRD

DATE FORW: 3-5-65

HOW FORW: *meeting slip*

BY: *[Signature]*

REC-3 157-2466 7  
EX-117

MAR 1 1965

*C.C. Wich*  
**ENCLOSURE**

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

Approved: *[Signature]*  
Special Agent in Charge

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

67 MAR 15 1965



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
February 26, 1965

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

On February 24, 1965,

informed as follows concerning the captioned organization:

He stated that on the night of February 21, 1965, he had attended a meeting in the early evening of the 21 members of the Executive Committee of the Bogalusa Voters League.

He stated he subsequently found out that on the night of February 21, 1965, there had been a meeting attended by six members of Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), three of whom he knew were and He stated there were three colored members of CORE also in attendance, but he did not know specifically who they were.

He stated that he had no knowledge of the actual nature of the discussion of this particular group which met with some other Bogalusa Negro citizens; however, he learned of the results of this on the night of February 22, 1965, at which time they had a general meeting of the Bogalusa Voters League.

He stated on that occasion Robert Hicks, 924 East Ninth Street, Bogalusa, Louisiana, took the floor and told the meeting which was attended by about fifty percent adults and fifty percent teenagers, of the plans of the Deacons for Defense and Justice.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 4-16-80 BY SP1/gh/lj

ENCLOSURE

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10 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
11 JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
12 PERCY LEE BRADFORD  
13

14  
15 In overhearing Hicks' discussion of this matter  
16 which Hicks had obviously learned from the CORE people at  
17 the Sunday evening meeting, the Deacons for Defense of  
18 Justice intended to organize a group to promote civil rights  
19 and its purposes were much the same as those of CORE, except  
20 that this group intended to purchase citizens band, radio  
21 walkie-talkies and other equipment for the purpose of com-  
22 municating with one another in case of violence against Negroes  
23 in the Bogalusa community.

24  
25 He stated that they talked, apparently at this meet-  
26 ing, about arming the Negro population in order that if any  
27 difficulty should arise with the police or with the Ku Klux  
28 Klan, or any other group, that the Negroes would be in a  
29 position to defend themselves and defend their fellow citizens  
30 who may be in some sort of difficulty.

31  
32 [REDACTED]  
33 [REDACTED]  
34 [REDACTED]  
35 [REDACTED]  
36 [REDACTED]  
37 [REDACTED]  
38 [REDACTED]  
39 [REDACTED]  
40 [REDACTED]  
41 [REDACTED]  
42 [REDACTED]  
43 [REDACTED]  
44 [REDACTED]  
45 [REDACTED]

46  
47 He stated that plans to enroll Bogalusa citizens  
48 in the Deacons for Defense of Justice at \$10.00 per person  
49 plus dues, probably would not receive a warm welcome at  
50 Bogalusa, although he personally realized that a certain  
51 segment of the population in the Negro community would be  
52 affected by this sort of talk and that [REDACTED]

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10 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
11 JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
12 PERCY LEE BRADFORD  
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15 [REDACTED] was not in a position where he could  
16 appeal to these people on an intelligent level as this matter  
17 would be entirely emotional with them.  
18

19 He stated that he hopes that he could do something  
20 to prevent development of this sort of activity in the Bogalusa  
21 community.  
22

23 [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED] advised on February 25, 1965, that on the night of  
25 February 21, 1965, a meeting was held at Bogalusa, Louisiana,  
26 among several of the local Negro citizens and six members of  
27 CORE who he identified as [REDACTED]  
28

29 [REDACTED] and another Negro whose  
30 name he does not recall.  
31

32 The nature of this meeting was to explain to the  
33 Bogalusa Negro community or its representatives, of the need  
34 for an organization to aid the Negro in protecting himself  
35 from elements in his community. He stated that this organiza-  
36 tion was to be known as the Deacons for the Defense of Justice  
37 and that the dues were to be \$10.00 initiation fee and \$2.00  
38 per month per person. He stated that of this money a certain  
39 percentage would be contributed to the statewide headquarters  
40 which was to have been established at Jonesboro, Louisiana.  
41 He stated that one of the CORE workers, [REDACTED]  
42 [REDACTED] and Ernest Thomas, discussed the considerable  
43 length that the monies were to be used from the dues and  
44 initiation fees to pay radio equipment, including walkie-  
45 talkies, citizens band equipment, as well as ammunition and  
46 other various pieces of equipment. He stated that there was  
47 some discussion about the Negroes arming themselves and  
48 there was discussion about machine guns and purchase of machine  
49 guns as well as ammunition. [REDACTED]  
50 [REDACTED]  
51  
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10 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
11 JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
12 PERCY LEE BRADFORD  
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14 [REDACTED] He stated that  
15 he was not too sure at this time, however, as to whether this  
16 organization was a good thing in view of the discussion about  
17 weapons and ammunition and in essence, a new militant position.  
18 He stated that the members from CORE who had met with them  
19 had discussed the fact that they had a charter for this  
20 organization but that [REDACTED] had not yet seen the charter  
21 and he did not expect to take any further action as to actually  
22 soliciting membership until such time as he could see the  
23 charter, study it, and discuss it at some length with an at-  
24 torney.  
25

26 [REDACTED] indicated that there had been temporary  
27 persons elected by this group, but did not identify these  
28 temporary officers. He did, however, point out that there  
29 was to be an additional meeting of those people who were  
30 interested in the Deacons for Defense of Justice on Sunday  
31 night, February 28, 1965, but that he did not know at this  
32 time whether there would be any CORE representatives or  
33 whether the members from Jonesboro who had inaugurated this  
34 program would be and to further spell out the aims and  
35 purposes of the Deacons for Defense of Justice.  
36

37 On February 26, 1965, [REDACTED]  
38 [REDACTED] advised that on February 21, 1965, he, [REDACTED]  
39 [REDACTED] appeared at two meetings in  
40 Bogalusa, Louisiana, [REDACTED]  
41 [REDACTED]

42 [REDACTED] stated that this organization was  
43 originated in the Jonesboro, Louisiana, area during the Summer  
44 of 1964. He stated that he believes the purpose of this  
45 organization is to assist Negroes in securing their rights  
46 to protect their homes and their families. [REDACTED] stated  
47 that this organization assists and advises Negroes as to the  
48 procurement of arms as well as instructs them how to obtain  
49 legal counsel in the event of court appearances.  
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9 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
10 JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
11 PERCY LEE BRADFORD  
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14 [REDACTED] stated that Robert Hicks, a local Negro leader  
15 in Bogalusa, Louisiana, is the representative of this organiza-  
16 tion in the Bogalusa area. [REDACTED] stated that on Monday,  
17 February 22, 1965, Robert Hicks addressed a meeting of the  
18 local Negroes in Bogalusa at which time he stated that the  
19 above captioned organization was being organized in the  
20 Bogalusa area. b7c  
b7d  
21

22 [REDACTED] noted that [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED] does  
24 not approved of the above captioned organization in that he  
25 feels that it is wrong for Negroes as part of an organization  
26 to secure arms, but feels that it is justifiable for individual  
27 Negro citizens to want to secure arms to defend their homes  
28 and families.  
29

30 [REDACTED] was unable to furnish any information as to  
31 how the procurement of arms was handled by the Deacons for  
32 Defense and Justice. [REDACTED] stated that he believes that this  
33 organization will be formed in the Bogalusa area in the near  
34 future.  
35  
36

37  
38 This document contains neither recommendations nor  
39 conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and  
40 is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to  
41 be distributed outside your agency.  
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FBI

Date: 3/4/65

Mr. Tolson	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Casper	_____
Mr. Callahan	_____
Mr. Conrad	_____
Mr. Felt	_____
Mr. Gale	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Sullivan	_____
Mr. Tavel	_____
Mr. Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Miss Holmes	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plain text or code)

12 Via AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

(Priority or Method of Mailing)

16 TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

17

18 FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290) (P)

19

20 SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE

21 JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

22 PERCY LEE BRADFORD

23 RM

24

*REC-3*

*Encl*

*B. Board*

25 Re New Orleans airtel of 2/24/65, and 2/26/65.

26 Enclosed for the Bureau are eight copies of a  
27 letterhead memorandum concerning captioned matter.

28 Enclosed for Chicago and Houston is one copy  
29 of above.

30 Copies furnished ICG and Secret Service, New  
31 Orleans.

32 ENCLOSURE

- 33 (3) - Bureau (Encl. 8)
- 34 1 - Chicago (Encl. 1) (Info)
- 35 1 - Houston (Encl. 1) (Info)
- 36 3 - New Orleans (1: 157-3290)
- 37 (1: 173-201)
- 38 (1: 157-3534)

39 ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

40 HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

41 DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1/see/H

42 FAS:sjt  
43 (8)

44 1 cc detached by  
45 Man-Hate Group Unit REC-3

46 AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER

47 DEPT ISD, CRD, Dept. of Commerce (CAS)

48 DATE FORW: 3-8-65

49 HOW FORW: routing slip

50 BY: KCB: EJ

*157-24668*

APR 10 1965

51 C. C. Wick

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

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



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

New Orleans, Louisiana

March 4, 1965

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

On March 1, 1965, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] informed that on the night of February 28, 1965, a volunteer meeting of the Deacons For Defense and Justice met at the Bogalusa Colored Union Hall, located on Third Avenue. He stated that this group which met was entirely local and was obviously a group which was following up the meeting of the previous week, which meeting had been attended by Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) members, and individuals from Jonesboro, Louisiana.

[REDACTED] stated that this meeting was obviously not attended by a sufficient number of Bogalusa Negro population to indicate much interest on the part of Bogalusa Negroes in the Deacons for Defense and Justice.

He provided the following names of those individuals who attended this meeting, which lasted approximately 35 or 40 minutes. He stated a total of 14 Negroes attended this meeting. Four of these individuals he was unable to identify. The others are as follows:

[REDACTED]

LA  
b7c

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [signature] 100-1-246 S

ENCLOSURE



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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
MONROE, LOUISIANA  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] LA

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] LA

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] LA

[REDACTED] advised that his inquiry into [REDACTED] for possible civic strife [REDACTED] type of organization.

[REDACTED] stated that of [REDACTED] that this organiza- [REDACTED] to be successful in [REDACTED] expression that his Negro [REDACTED] of becoming affiliated in [REDACTED] which had as its purpose [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] of the matter recommendations [REDACTED] the property of the [REDACTED] and its contents [REDACTED] agency.

b7c

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Memorandum

MR. BELMONT *also*

DATE: March 15, 1965

FROM: J. H. GALE *JH*

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

- Tolson \_\_\_\_\_
- Belmont \_\_\_\_\_
- Mohr \_\_\_\_\_
- DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_
- Casper \_\_\_\_\_
- Callahan \_\_\_\_\_
- Conrad \_\_\_\_\_
- Felt \_\_\_\_\_
- Gale \_\_\_\_\_
- Rosen \_\_\_\_\_
- Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_
- Tavel \_\_\_\_\_
- Trotter \_\_\_\_\_
- Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_
- Holmes \_\_\_\_\_
- Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harold Reis of the Department telephonically advised that Governor LeRoy Collins, Director of the Community Relations Service, was in to see the Attorney General this morning at which time Collins expressed a great deal of concern with reference to an organization known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice which is located in Jonesboro, Louisiana. He advised that the organization is led by an extremely militant Negro whose name he didn't know and is the Negro counterpart of the Minute Men. He was desirous of being furnished any background information we have on this organization and of any investigation we are conducting concerning the same.

A check with the Domestic Intelligence Division concerning this organization reveals our New Orleans Office has previously advised concerning the Deacons for Defense and Justice. Information was furnished to the Civil Rights Division and the Internal Security Division of the Department by memoranda dated February 24, 1965, and March 4, 1965. The Deacons for Defense and Justice is a recently formed Negro organization in the State of Louisiana, including members of CORE and individuals from Jonesboro, Louisiana. At a meeting February 21, 1965, at Bogalusa, Louisiana, one Ernest Thomas who did most of the talking stated that the collection of initiation fees and dues are to be used to purchase radio equipment, walkie-talkies, literature and ammunition. Thomas pointed out Negroes should arm themselves, not only for defensive reasons, but that the Negroes should have roving patrols so that if a Negro was being arrested by a

- 1 - Mr. Belmont
- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Gale

JHG:tjm  
(6)

4 MAR 21 1965

REC-1

3 MAR 18 1965

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 B/L/fv

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12 Memorandum to Mr. Belmont  
13 RE: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
14

15  
16 police officer other Negroes could come to the aid of the arrested  
17 person.  
18

19  
20 Immediate investigation was initiated by the field because  
21 of the indicated potential for violence. Investigation is to include  
22 the identification of Ernest Thomas and the activity of the organiza-  
23 tion.  
24

25 Information has been furnished to Secret Service as well as  
26 military intelligence concerning this group. Investigation is being  
27 closely followed.  
28

29  
30 ACTION:  
31

32 Since information concerning the Deacons for Defense and  
33 Justice has already been furnished to the Department, Mr. Reis'  
34 attention will be called to the previous memoranda furnished to the  
35 Civil Rights Division and the Internal Security Division.  
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*JLP*

FBI

Date: 3/3/65

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(Type in plain text or code)

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(Priority or Method of Mailing)

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TO: DIRECTOR, FBI  
FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS  
SUBJECT: ORIGINAL KNIGHTS OF THE  
KU KLUX KLAN  
RM  
NO FILE: 105-1057

TESTING OF LOCAL FACILITIES,  
BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA;  
PUBLIC ACCOMODATIONS,  
PUBLIC FACILITES,  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964  
RM  
NO FILE: 173-201  
BUFILE: 173-987

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA;  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD  
RM  
NO FILE: 157-3290  
BUFILE: 157-2466

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP18/clf

Reference New Orleans teletype to Bureau  
and New Orleans airtel to Bureau 2/26/65 entitled  
"DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE; JONESBORO, LOUIS-  
IANA; PERCY LEE BRADFORD, RM."

- 9 - Bureau
- 7 - New Orleans (2: 157-3290)  
(2: 173-201)  
(2: 105-1057)  
(1: 157-1319)

FAS:sjt  
(16)

CARBON COPY

157-2466

NOT RECORDED

202 MAR 19 1965

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

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

56 MAR 24 1965

10 [REDACTED] stated that they also discussed  
11 at some length the OKKKK, particularly as this pertained  
12 to Bogalusa, which he stated is without question the  
13 better organized units of all units in Louisiana.  
14

15 He stated that they discussed together in some  
16 detail the advantages and disadvantages of making a  
17 request through the Louisiana Congressional Delegates,  
18 including Congressman HALE BOGGS, Senator ALLAN J. ELLENDER  
19 Senator RUSSELL LONG, Congressman JAMES H. MORRISON,  
20 and others to apply pressure to some governmental investi-  
21 gative body with subpoena powers to investigate this  
22 organization in Louisiana. [REDACTED] stated the  
23 main feeling of the Governor was that if a governmental  
24 agency with subpoena power could inquire into the struc-  
25 ture of the OKKKK and into its purposes and aims with  
26 respect to its violence potential, that this may cause  
27 the organization to dissolve as a result of its exposure  
28 to the public.  
29

30 [REDACTED] emphasized that this matter is  
31 only in the talking stages at this time, but that he  
32 hoped that possibly some decision could be arrived at  
33 in the next couple of weeks as to the merits of making  
34 such a request. He stated that it was agreed that no  
35 action would be taken by the Governor until such time  
36 as the Governor again communicated with him and informed  
37 him of his plans.  
38

39 [REDACTED]  
40 [REDACTED]  
41 [REDACTED]  
42 [REDACTED]  
43 [REDACTED]  
44 [REDACTED]  
45 [REDACTED]  
46 [REDACTED]  
47 [REDACTED]  
48 [REDACTED]  
49 [REDACTED]  
50 [REDACTED]  
51 [REDACTED]  
52 [REDACTED]  
53 [REDACTED]  
54 [REDACTED]

b7C  
b7D

23 [REDACTED] stated that he is well aware of the  
24 FBI's responsibility with respect to organizations as  
25 The Deacons for Defense and Justice, and the OKKKK. He  
26 stated that he was most willing to co-operate at all  
27 times with the FBI, as he felt that the FBI had been of  
28 much assistance to [REDACTED] already in  
29 keeping the local authorities advised of potential  
30 demonstrations, etc. He stated that he would immediately  
31 advise the FBI of any information which he received from  
32 the Governor which would indicate the Governor's plans.

33 This matter is being followed on a continuing  
34 basis at Bogalusa and if any plans are finalized, the  
35 Bureau will be informed by letterhead memorandum suitable  
36 for dissemination.  
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3-19-65

PLAINTEXT

1 - Mr. Trainor  
1 - Mr. Freund

TELETYPE

DEFERRED

TO SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3003)

FROM DIRECTOR, FBI

JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL PAREN NEGRO END PAREN, JONESBORO,  
LOUISIANA, RACIAL MATTER.

RE NEW ORLEANS TEL MARCH EIGHTEEN LAST.

NEW ORLEANS CONSIDER INTERVIEWING [REDACTED]

b7C  
b7D

AND

DEACONS

FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC. IF REASON EXISTS FOR NOT INTERVIEW  
ENTIRE, ADVISE BUREAU DETAILS.

REMITTAL PRIOR BUREAU INSTRUCTIONS RE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE  
AND JUSTICE AND KEEP BUREAU CURRENTLY ADVISED. CONTINUE TO  
OBTAIN DETERMINED MEMORANDA PROMPTLY. 157-2466-

NOT RECORDED  
174 MAR 24 1965

FHF:JMW (5)

D - Deacons for Defense and Justice, Inc.

NOTE: Deacons for Defense and Justice is a Negro group in Louisiana allegedly formed to provide assistance to Negroes being arrested. Group alleged to be arming. Captioned situation involves Negroes protesting and demonstrating as result of rumor that high school coach Kirkpatrick reportedly active in recent civil rights activity was to be dismissed from position. Some indication that Deacons for Defense and Justice might be involved in violence in connection with this action. New Orleans previously instructed to expedite investigation of alleged organization to determine existence, leadership and activities and to consider complete interviews of leaders. Teletype being sent because of volatile racial situation and indication that Deacons for Defense and Justice may be involved.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 4-16-80 BY SP1/SLK/1K

DUPLICATE YELLOW OF  
WIRE TRANSMITTED

58 MAR 24 1965

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

MR. BELMONT

DATE: March 15, 1965

FROM

J. H. GALE

SUBJECT

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

- Tolson \_\_\_\_\_
- Belmont \_\_\_\_\_
- Mohr \_\_\_\_\_
- DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_
- Casper \_\_\_\_\_
- Callahan \_\_\_\_\_
- Conrad \_\_\_\_\_
- Felt \_\_\_\_\_
- Gale \_\_\_\_\_
- Rosen \_\_\_\_\_
- Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_
- Tavel \_\_\_\_\_
- Trotter \_\_\_\_\_
- Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_
- Holmes \_\_\_\_\_
- Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

As indicated in my previous memorandum today, Mr. Reis requested information concerning the above-captioned organization, in view of a conversation which Governor LeRoy Collins, Director of the Community Relations Service, had with the Attorney General this morning. Mr. Reis was referred to our memoranda dated February 24, and March 4, 1965, advising the Department concerning this extremely militant Negro organization.

Mr. Reis was appreciative of this information and advised that he had now received additional information that Governor Collins or his aide, [REDACTED] had received a tip that the Deacons for Defense and Justice, Jonesboro, Louisiana, would do something "drastic" in the next two or three days. He was unable to furnish any specifics but requested that Governor Collins be contacted to see what specifics he had concerning this matter.

## ACTION

That Governor Collins be contacted to determine the specifics of the alleged information in his possession that the Deacons for Defense and Justice would do something drastic in the next two or three days and that the New Orleans Office be immediately alerted to this information for their assistance in closely following this organization -- if approved, to be handled by the Domestic Intelligence Division.

- 1 - Mr. Belmont
- 1 - Mr. Gale
- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan

JHG:LS  
(6)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7/16/80 BY SP1 JAL/jf

3 MAR 18 1965

58 MAR 20 1965

REC-1

Being done

159-2466 10

THOMAS



3-16-65

PLAINTEXT

TELETYPE

DEFERRED

*22E 3*

TO SAC NEW ORLEANS

FROM DIRECTOR, FBI

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RACIAL MATTERS (ORGANIZATION)  
 RE NEW ORLEANS TEL MARCH SIXTEEN INSTANT, CAPTIONED JACKSON  
 HIGH SCHOOL (NEGRO), JONESBORO, LOUISIANA. NEW ORLEANS EXPEDITE  
 INVESTIGATION OF CAPTIONED ALLEGED ORGANIZATION TO DETERMINE ITS  
 EXISTENCE, LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES. INVESTIGATION  
 SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO POINT WHERE FULL AND COMPLETE INTERVIEWS CAN  
 BE CONDUCTED ██████████ EXPEDITE AND KEEP BUREAU IMMEDIATELY  
 ADVISED OF PERTINENT DEVELOPMENTS.

FHF:JMW (3)

NOTE: Deacons for Defense and Justice is a Negro group formed in Louisiana with one Ernest Thomas apparently its spokesman. Thomas has told Negroes they should arm themselves and form roving patrols which will assist Negroes when the Negroes are being arrested. Initiation fees and dues of the group are to be used to purchase ammunition, radio ~~XX~~ equipment and literature. The New Orleans Office is conducting a current investigation of this group to determine its activities and leadership.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
 COMMUNICATIONS SECTION  
 MAR 16 1965

REC 53 57-2466-11

21 MAR 18 1965

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DATE 7-16-88 BY SP1 SCL/TJL

*Frederick*  
*F/SB*

56 MAR 26 1965

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

MAR 16 1965

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FBI NEW ORLS

FBI WASH DC

607PM DEFERRED 3-16-65 RPP

TO NEW ORLEANS

FROM DIRECTOR 1P

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RACIAL MATTERS (ORGNIZATION).

RE NEW ORLEANS TEL MARCH SIXTEEN INSTANT, CAPTIONED JACKSON  
HIGH SCHOOL (NEGRO), JONESBORO, LOUISIANA. NEW ORLEANS EXPEDITE  
INVESTIGATION OF CAPTIONED ALLEGED ORGANIZATION TO DETERMINE ITS  
EXISTENCE, LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES. INVESTIGATION  
SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO POINT WHERE FULL AND COMPLETE INTERVIEWS CAN  
CONDUCTED ██████████ EXPEDITE AND KEEP BUREAU IMMEDIATELY  
ADVISED OF PERTINENT DEVELOPMENTS.

END

NO.....RJS

FBI NEW ORLS

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP 1826/jk

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gml/fj/rlw

- 1 - Mr. Belmont
- 1 - Mr. Mohr
- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Casper
- 1 - Mr. Callahan
- 1 - Mr. Conrad
- 1 - Mr. Felt
- 1 - Mr. Gale
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Tavel
- 1 - Mr. Trotter
- 1 - Tele. Room
- 1 - Mr. Holmes
- 1 - Mr. Gandy

- Tolson \_\_\_\_\_
- Belmont \_\_\_\_\_
- Mohr \_\_\_\_\_
- DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_
- Casper \_\_\_\_\_
- Callahan \_\_\_\_\_
- Conrad \_\_\_\_\_
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- Trotter \_\_\_\_\_
- Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_
- Holmes \_\_\_\_\_
- Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. W. C. Sullivan

Mr. F. J. Baumgardner

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
RACIAL MATTERS (ORGANIZATION)

FROM:  
SUBJECT:

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This is to advise you of the nature of captioned organization and its current activities. The Deacons for Defense and Justice is a Negro group allegedly being formed in the State of Louisiana. Its headquarters are believed to be in Jonesboro, Louisiana. Its President is reportedly Percy Lee Bradford and its Vice President is reportedly Earnest Thomas. Thomas has told Negroes that they should arm and form roving patrols which will assist any Negroes who may be arrested. Initiation fees and dues of this alleged group are to be used to purchase ammunition, radio equipment and literature. The New Orleans Office is conducting a current investigation of this alleged group to determine if it is in existence, the identities of its leadership and its specific activities. Currently, the Deacons for Defense and Justice appear to be interested in a demonstration which has been occurring at the Jackson High School (Negro), Jonesboro, Louisiana. Students there have been demonstrating in protest of the rumored dismissal of the Athletic Coach F. D. Kirkpatrick for his recent activity in behalf of civil rights. School authorities have not made known whether the coach is to be dismissed or the basis for such a dismissal.

Leroy Collins, Director, Community Relations Service, Department of Commerce, has expressed an interest in captioned organization. Pertinent information has been furnished to the Community Relations Service, Civil Rights Division and Internal Security Division of the Department, as well as military intelligence agencies and appropriate state and local authorities in the State of Louisiana.

New Orleans is following this matter closely and has been instructed to expedite its investigation of the captioned organization. We have been pressing for early interviews of [redacted] for the deterrent value such interviews might have. New Orleans has advised that since [redacted] are taking an active part in negotiations through the Community Relations Service with school authorities in an effort to resolve this dispute, they will not be interviewed until after a meeting 3/22/65 of the school board and the leaders of factions involved. This seems reasonable because otherwise we might be injecting ourselves into the middle of this school dispute. We are continuing to press vigorously our investigation of captioned organization.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.

ARG:chs:pah  
(11)

REC-137  
10 MAR 25 1965  
12

FBI

Date: 3/26/65

Mr. Tolson	
Mr. DeLoach	
Mr. Mohr	
Mr. Bishop	
Mr. Casper	
Mr. Callahan	
Mr. Conrad	
Mr. Felt	
Mr. Gale	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Sullivan	
Mr. Tavel	
Mr. Trotter	

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

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

(Priority)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-91 BY SP1/SL/JS

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (157-2466)

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290) (P)

SUBJECT: "CHANGED"  
DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC.  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA  
RM

*B. Gardner*  
*2/15/3-1*  
*C. J. [unclear]*  
*Martin*  
*Kridger*

The title is marked changed to show the correct corporate name of this organization, which was previously referred to before it was incorporated by the name Deacons for Defense and Justice.

Enclosed to the Bureau are 10 copies of a letterhead memorandum in this matter; the extra copies are submitted for the Bureau file in the matter captioned JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL (NEGRO), JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, RM.

LEADS

NEW ORLEANS DIVISION

AT JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

Will conduct interviews with [redacted] of Deacons of Defense and Justice, Jonesboro, Louisiana, as set forth below to determine in detail the objectives of the organization and how these objectives are to be attained, with particular emphasis on possible use of firearms, potential for violence, any subversive and/or outside influence, whether patrols and guards

- 3 - Bureau (Enc-10)
- 4 - New Orleans (2-157-3290) (2-157-3693)

EC/bab (7)

REC-42

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER  
DEPT ISD, CRD, [unclear]

DATE FORW: 4-6-65

HOW FORW: [unclear]

BY: MCT/AP 157-2466/3/27/65

8 APR 8 1965

Approved: [Signature] Special Agent in Charge

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NO 157-3290

have been utilized and under what conditions; develop any information, particularly from [REDACTED] concerning the allegation [REDACTED] that this group has contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons; as instructed by Bureau by airtel dated 2/26/65 intensify efforts to develop sources relative to DDJ and be alert to discouraging illegal arming and illegal acts by the group through interviews. To be interviewed: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

b7C  
b7D

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Additional information on this organization and its activity at Bogalusa, Louisiana, was furnished in memoranda dated February 24, 1965 captioned "Deacons for Defense and Justice"; and February 26, 1965 and March 4, 1965 captioned "Deacons for Defense and Justice, Jonesboro, Louisiana, Percy Lee Bradford."



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana  
March 25, 1965

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1/sdh/jk

DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC.  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

From July 1964 to October 9, 1964 the town of Jonesboro, Louisiana, had 5 Negro special police officers, during racial demonstrations and testing of Public Accommodations and Public Facilities under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Three of the officers were

and  
-- all of whom had other employment and served on a part-time basis without pay. These Negro special police positions were discontinued by the town of Jonesboro on October 9, 1964.

advised on January 5, 1965 the Negroes organized a Negro Patrol of the Negro section of town to guard against such incidents as a Ku Klux Klan motor parade through the Negro section which occurred July 16, 1964 also to remove the fear among Negroes of incidents that might occur from Klansmen going into the Negro Section for possible acts of reprisal in the Negro section or persons exercising their rights, particularly rights granted under the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

stated that he felt that the Negro section was in need of police protection, which he said could not be had from the regular law enforcement officers of the area, particularly after the special Negro police were discontinued. stated that the name the group adopted was Deacons for Defense and Justice (later incorporated under the name Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc., (DDJ). stated that the leader of the group was Percy Lee Bradford. said that DDJ patrols were not ordinarily armed but that they were to have available to them firearms if needed for self-defense.

advised on January 5, 1965 that DDJ was a non-violent organization within Jackson Parish formed to promote justice for the Negro. stated that the DDJ followed the same principals as laid down by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE),

ENCLOSURE

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14 except its members would, if attacked, defend themselves  
15 by use of force. He said the DDJ had two citizens band  
16 radios and two walkie talkies to be used to communicate  
17 with one another in case violence against a Negro should  
18 be initiated in Jackson Parish. [REDACTED] stated  
19 that there were between 250 and 300 members of DDJ within  
20 the parish; he said that they did not carry arms, although  
21 possession of shotguns and rifles for hunting is common-  
22 place in the area. He said that the following were  
23 leaders at that time of DDJ, which was not chartered, or  
24 incorporated, at that time:

25 B. APPEAL

26 President: Percy Lee-Bradford  
27 Vice President: Henry Collins Amos  
28 Secretary: [REDACTED]  
29 Finance Secretary: [REDACTED]  
30 Group Leaders: [REDACTED]  
31 [REDACTED]  
32 [REDACTED]

33 On January 5, 1965 [REDACTED]

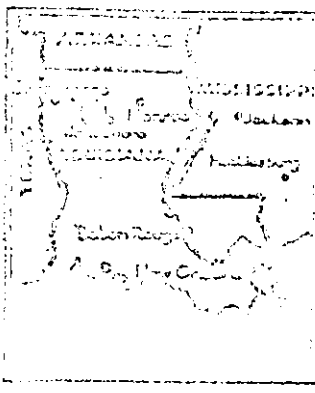
34 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

35 [REDACTED] advised that  
36 they were aware of the existence of such a group as DDJ  
37 and were aware of patrols of such a group.  
38

39 [REDACTED]  
40 [REDACTED] advised January 5, 1965  
41 that an organization known as Deacons for Defense of  
42 Justice, with Percy Lee Bradford, Negro male, age about  
43 44, as president, has been organized at Jonesboro,  
44 Louisiana. He stated that this organization was organized  
45 to promote Negroes' civil rights and that its purposes  
46 were much the same as those of CORE. He stated that  
47 whereas CORE is completely non-violent in its methods  
48 of dealing with civil rights matters, DDJ would be more  
49 militant and inclined to use violence in dealing with  
50 any violent opposition encountered. He stated that  
51 the DDJ has night patrols in the Negro sections of  
52 Jonesboro and he feels that these night patrols are  
53 armed.  
54

55 Following is a clipping from the New York Times,  
56 Sunday, February 21, 1965 under dateline February 19,  
57 1965 at Jonesboro, Louisiana:  
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# How Negroes Make Jonesboro an Unusual Town



you to that boy," said the lady. Negroes... the... "He's just like a brother one of us..."

...a CORE worker Mr. Pen... He Negro... had to carefully explain his... belongs to the Deacons name... In... of whom could not... churches were... and... why Mr. Pen... from... didn't want them to bring their... into the office.

"I hope that they will become... Southern University in... a... have started program... to..."

...the... believe that... their... has... to... in... into... they... not... given...

"But what do we can all... what would have happened... Jonesboro... known... they said... their own... of the county law... Mr. Pen... know... in the... after... variations, and... have been more... than usual. In another... said, a... was... a... 17-year-old Negro who... a... of a... with The Dea... the boy and took him... They... changed her story. One... of the Deacons... that... this boy... lynched. No far... of the white... to... of the... who... It is obvious, how... and... and somewhat... of... Jonesboro... because it... Parish, of which Jonesboro... the... to... a reporter... He said: "If I have anything... to give out, I'd give it to... newspaper boys around here... We got boys in Saravapor... who see things the way... we do and I give... There has been... of to them."

spread through the Negro... neighborhood, which is called... the... and which consists... of... frame... closely... of... have... carrying... someone... and one... a... Now... is... and... outside the... the... a... the... a... the... the... because it... Jonesboro... a reporter... He said: "If I have anything... to give out, I'd give it to... newspaper boys around here... We got boys in Saravapor... who see things the way... we do and I give... There has been... of to them."

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ENCLOSURE



[REDACTED] advised on March 20, 1965 that [REDACTED] had been aware of the existence of such an organization as DDJ for about three or four months and had seen Negro men apparently on patrol, or on guard in areas of testing of public accommodations by Negroes under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He stated that the Negro men most often observed on the apparent patrols or guard details included Percy Lee Bradford, Earnest Thomas, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stated also that an article had been submitted from Jonesboro and published in the New York Times on February 21, 1965 recounting real or imaginary activities of DDJ, and in the article statements were made that members of DDJ were armed and equipped with citizens band (CB) radios. [REDACTED] stated that transmissions by Negroes on CB radios had been monitored on many occasions at Jonesboro, indicating that the Negro patrols and guard details were on duty, but no record had been kept of such transmissions that were monitored.

[REDACTED] stated that on January 30, 1965 about 10 unknown white persons were visiting in Jonesboro at the CORE office during the day and that night they were at the Minute Spot, a Negro cafe, along with Percy Lee Bradford, Earnest Thomas, [REDACTED], and other Negroes. He stated that activities of that day indicated that the Negroes had been providing patrols and guards in connection with the visiting white persons and that night, just before midnight, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] drove by the Minute Spot Cafe and observed Bradford, Thomas, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] standing in front of the cafe. [REDACTED] was holding in his hands a shotgun, and the officers stopped and arrested him. [REDACTED] claimed that the shotgun was not his and that he was merely holding it, but he gave no information on whose gun it was or whom he got it from. Recovered from him was a 12 gauge shotgun loaded with a "ring" shell, and eight other "ring" shells were recovered from his pockets. A "ring" shell was described as a shotgun shell with a cut ring around the shell, so that when the shell is discharged in the gun, not only are the pellets expelled through the gun barrel, but a

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portion of the shell casing is discharged with the load, making a large slug-type projectile. [redacted] stated that [redacted] was in the presence of Bradford, Thomas, [redacted] and [redacted] when he was arrested, and that they arrived at the jail promptly to bond him out after he was charged with displaying a dangerous weapon in a public place while under the influence of intoxicants. He said that [redacted] later entered a plea of guilty to the charge.

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[redacted] stated that he felt reasonably sure that these patrols and guard details were armed, because on recent occasions some of those most active had been arrested and loaded firearms had been recovered from them when arrested.

[redacted] stated that a [redacted] who resides near Jonesboro City Hall, observed [redacted] leave his taxi near city hall during the period of police roadblocks on March 11, 1965 and walk toward the Negro section; he said she observed [redacted] return to the taxi later carrying a rifle. [redacted] stated that [redacted] was arrested on March 15, 1965 for carrying a concealed weapon, and at that time there were recovered from him a .22 caliber automatic rifle and a four-barrel .22 caliber pistol, both loaded; recovered from him also at the time of arrest were two walkie talkie CB radios.

[redacted] stated that [redacted] was arrested on March 11, 1965 for resisting an officer and carrying a concealed weapon, and at the time of arrest there was recovered from him a .22 caliber automatic rifle, loaded, which [redacted] had been carrying in his car during the period of the demonstrations at Jackson High School (Negro) in Jonesboro.

and [redacted]

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14 [REDACTED] advised on March  
15 17, 1965 that Percy Lee Bradford and Earnest Thomas  
16 spoke out against the proposal of the school board  
17 that the students discontinue demonstrations and  
18 return to classes as a condition of the School Board's  
19 acceptance of the proposal to meet with the Negroes  
20 at Jackson High School on March 22, 1965. [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED] supported the effort to get the students to  
22 discontinue demonstrations on March 17, 1965 as a basis  
23 for the meeting with the School Board, but because in part,  
24 at least, of the influence of Bradford and Thomas,  
25 President and Vice President, respectively of DDJ the  
26 demonstrations continued.  
27

28 The corporation charter records of the office  
29 of Jackson Parish Clerk of Court, Jonesboro, Louisiana,  
30 under registry file number 172923, contain a charter of  
31 Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc., Jonesboro,  
32 Louisiana, filed March 8, 1965 showing that this  
33 organization, as a corporation, was formed March 5,  
34 1965 by notarial act before James Sharp, Jr., Notary,  
35 and Attorney, at Monroe, Louisiana. Following is a  
36 copy of this charter as filed with the Jackson Parish  
37 Clerk of Court, Jonesboro, Louisiana:  
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172923

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

OF

STATE OF LOUISIANA

DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC.

PARISH OF OUACHITA

BE IT KNOWN, That on this the 5th day of the Month of March, in the Year of Our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Five:

BEFORE ME, a Notary Public, in and for this Parish and State, personally came and appeared the several parties of full majority whose signatures are subscribed, who declared in the presence of the undersigned competent witnesses, that availing themselves of the provisions of Louisiana Revised Statutes of 19 Sections 12:101 - 12:155, they do hereby organize a nonprofit corporation as defined in Revised Statute 12:101 (8) under and in accordance with these articles of incorporation.

ARTICLE I. "NAME"

The name of this corporation is "Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc."

ARTICLE II. "PURPOSES"

This corporation is organized for the following purposes and to carry on the following purposes: To instruct, train, teach and educate Citizens of the United States and especially minority groups in the fundamental principals of the republican form of government and our democratic way of life; to instruct, teach, train and educate said persons in the provisions of the constitution and laws of the United State and the State of Louisiana, as well as the constitution and laws of any other State wherein this corporation may operate; to instruct, teach, train and educate said persons in the use, value and purpose of the ballot and the right to vote; to instruct, teach, train and educate said persons as to the duties and responsibilities of good citizenship relative to the obligation

Handwritten signatures and notary marks at the bottom right of the page.

7  
8 duties of the citizen to the community and the obligation and duties  
9 of the community to the citizen: To further instruct, teach, train  
10 and educate said persons in the value of economic security and in  
11 the effective use of their spending power; to inspire in said persons  
12 a sense of responsibility and to develop leadership. This corpor-  
13 ation has for its further purpose, and is dedicated to, the defense  
14 of the civil rights, property rights and personal rights of said  
15 people and will defend said rights by any and all honorable and  
16 legal means to the end that justice may be obtained. This corpor-  
17 ation may establish chapters and conduct its business at any place  
18 in this State and elsewhere as permitted by law.

19  
20 ARTICLE III. "DURATION"

21 This corporation shall enjoy corporate existence for a  
22 period of ninety-nine (99) years from date hereof.

23  
24 ARTICLE IV. "REGISTERED OFFICE"

25 The location and post office address of its registered  
26 office shall be: Amos Service Station, (rear), Beach Spring Road,  
27 Drawer B, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

28  
29 ARTICLE V. "REGISTERED AGENTS"

30 The full names and post office addresses of its registered  
31 agents are:

- 32 1. Earnest Thomas, P. O. Box 472, Jonesboro, Louisiana.
- 33 2. Elmo Jacobs, P. O. Box 124, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

34  
35 ARTICLE VI. "BASIS OF ORGANIZATION"

36 This corporation shall be organized without capital stock  
37 and membership shall be evidenced by certificates of membership. The  
38 membership shall be constituted and composed of all of the under-  
39 signed incorporators and all persons hereinafter who apply for  
40 membership and satisfactory show that they are dedicated to the  
41 proposition of protecting through any and all legal means those  
42 rights granted by appropriate law to all Citizens of the United  
States of America and particularly members of minority groups and

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3 are accepted as members by a majority of the members of this  
4 corporation present and voting at a regular meeting.  
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12 ARTICLE VII. "BOARD OF DIRECTORS"

13 The affairs of this corporation shall be managed by a  
14 Board of Directors consisting of five (5) members of this corpor-  
15 ation from the time of incorporation until said number is changed  
16 by an amendment to the article or by-laws of this corporation and  
17 the following shall constitute the first Board of Directors:  
18

- 19  
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23  
24 1. Percy Lee Bradford P. O. Box 95, Jonesboro, Louisiana  
25 2. Earnest Thomas P. O. Box 492, Jonesboro, Louisiana  
26 3. Charlie White P. O. Box 733, Jonesboro, Louisiana  
27 4. Cosetta Jackson General Delivery, Jonesboro, Louisiana  
28 5. Elmo Jacobs P. O. Box 124, Jonesboro, Louisiana  
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35 The qualification, term of office, manner of election,  
36 composition, powers and duties of the directors, the time and  
37 place and manner of calling, giving notice and of conducting directors  
38 meetings and number of directors which shall constitute a quorum,  
39 shall be prescribed by the by-laws.  
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46 ARTICLE VII. "POWER AND CAPACITY"

47 This corporation shall have the capacity to act possessed  
48 by natural person and shall have authority to perform those acts  
49 which are necessary and proper to accomplish the purposes expressed  
50 or implied in these articles or that may be incidental thereto and  
51 shall have all the power, authority and capacity of a nonprofit  
52 corporation as provided for by Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,  
53 Title 12:101 - 12:155 without limiting said powers, this corporation  
54 shall have the power and authority to receive, hold and administer  
55 property in trust as provided by law, to sue and be sued in the  
56 corporate name, to make and use a corporate seal, to hold, purchase,  
57 lease, mortgage, sell and receive by donation or otherwise, real,  
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7 personal or mixed property, to borrow money to issue, negotiate,  
8 sell and pledge evidences of indebtedness and to secure same by  
9 pledges, deeds of trust or mortgage, of both the whole or any part  
10 of the property of this corporation; and to receive, collect and  
11 pay out money for the accomplishment of its corporate purposes.

18 ARTICLE IX. "OFFICERS"

19 The Board of Directors shall elect the following officers:  
20  
21 A President, who shall be chairman of the Board of Directors, a Vice-  
22 President, who shall be Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, a  
23 Secretary and a Treasurer. The board shall regulate and collect dues  
24 from all members according to its by-laws made for said purpose.  
25 The Board of Directors may create new offices and regulate the duties  
26 of the officers as it may deem advisable. The first officers are:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>
1. Percy Lee Bradford	President
2. Earnest Thomas	Vice-President
3. Charlie White	Secretary
4. Cosetta Jackson	Treasurer

25 ARTICLE X.

26 The Board of Directors shall have the power to make, amend  
27 and repeal by-laws to govern this corporation provided they are in  
28 accordance with and do not conflict with these articles.

29 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, said Incorporators have hereunto  
30 signed their names at Monroe, Louisiana, in the presence of  
31 Barbara L. Sharp and Geraldine Williams, legal and competent  
32 witnesses, and me, said Notary Public, on this the 5th day of March,  
33 in the Year of Our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Five.

34 WITNESSES:

Barbara L. Sharp

Geraldine Williams

James Skoug  
NOTARY PUBLIC

Percy Lee Bradford  
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

Earnest Thomas  
EARNEST THOMAS

Elmo Jacobs  
ELMO JACOBS

Charlie White  
CHARLIE WHITE

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14 On March 24, 1965, [REDACTED] was contacted  
15 and interviewed regarding another matter [REDACTED]  
16 [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED] voluntarily furnished information  
18 that he is a member of Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc.  
19 (DDJ), Jonesboro, which he described as a civic organization  
20 dedicated to civic improvement in the Negro community and to  
21 protection of the civil rights of persons in the Negro  
22 community. [REDACTED] stated that DDJ is entirely non-violent,  
23 but that some of the members have firearms for self-defense  
24 and for protection against persons, possibly connected  
25 with the Ku Klux Klan, who might go to the Negro section of  
26 town to engage in violence. There was observed a double-  
27 barrel shotgun, a single-barrel shotgun, a .30 caliber  
28 rifle and a .22 caliber rifle all standing in the corner of  
29 the office [REDACTED]  
30 The .30 caliber rifle was observed to have the name [REDACTED]  
31 [REDACTED] taped on it. During the conversation with [REDACTED] it  
32 was observed that [REDACTED] walked into the office, and  
33 [REDACTED] handed him a loaded .45 caliber revolver in a leather  
34 holster from the desk drawer.  
35

36 [REDACTED] stated that members of the DDJ do not engage  
37 in armed patrols, but that the stories of their armed  
38 patrols were given out to discourage klansmen and persons  
39 of that kind from going into the Negro section to cause  
40 trouble. He stated that there have been a number of  
41 crosses burned in the Negro section within the last year  
42 or two, and that one night in July, 1964, a motercade of  
43 about 30 cars with persons wearing hoods and white robes  
44 drove through the Negro section of town, led by a police  
45 car of the Jonesboro Police Department.  
46

47 [REDACTED] took from his desk a copy of the charter  
48 of DDJ, and he stated that the officers and members of  
49 the Board of Directors of the organization are responsible,  
50 civic-minded residents of Jonesboro. He stated that the  
51 organization has a very limited membership, although it  
52 had made claim of a very large membership in order to be  
53 more effective in discouraging persons from entering the  
54 Negro section for the purpose of causing trouble.  
55

56 [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED]  
57 and [REDACTED] as representatives of DDJ, had a meeting  
58 with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
59 [REDACTED]



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14 Jonesboro, Louisiana, on the morning of March 24, 1965, and  
15 presented to them a plan for civil improvement of the Negro  
16 section of Jonesboro, including a clean-up drive and a plan  
17 for street signs and house numbers throughout the Negro  
18 section.

19  
20 ██████████ stated that DDJ definitely does not advocate  
21 violence and that the use of firearms would be approved  
22 only for self-defense or for use to prevent klansmen or  
23 organized groups from entering the Negro section to beat up  
24 a resident of the area or to engage in acts of violence  
25 against a resident of the area. ██████████ stated that he felt  
26 that ██████████ of DDJ would be glad to furnish information to  
27 the FBI about the DDJ.  
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51 This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions  
52 of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned  
53 to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed  
54 outside your agency.  
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# Memorandum

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: 4/30/65

FROM: SAC, CHICAGO (157-572) (P)

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE,  
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA; PERCY LEE  
BRADFORD  
RACIAL MATTERS

ReNOairtel dated February 24, 1965.

During the period March 9, 1965, to April 27, 1965, a number of firearm dealers in Chicago, Illinois, have been contacted relative to investigation requested in referenced communication. Based on information furnished by these dealers, determination cannot be made with any degree of certainty as to shipments of firearms to the Jonesboro, Bogalusa, or New Orleans area on the basis of available descriptive data.

Representatives of gun dealers in Chicago from whom firearms can be purchased either on an over-the-counter retail basis or through mail order purchases are the following:

[REDACTED]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 JCL/jk

REC-39

- 2-Bureau
- 3-New Orleans (157-3290)  
(1 - 173-201)
- 1-Chicago

RJD:MDW  
(6)

1 copies made  
3-20-78 DJC/PPB  
for review at FBIHQ by  
HSCA: request 3-8-78 cc  
Waldman

EX 109

MAY 3 1965

SUBV. CONTROL

64 MAY 1965

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As a result of interviews conducted with the above identified individuals, the following points are noted which, in effect, would preclude an exacting search of gun dealer records in Chicago, Illinois, for shipments of firearms to the named Louisiana areas:

- 1) It is noted that no law in the State of Illinois requires dealer registration of weapons other than hand guns and normally only the name and address of the purchaser as furnished by the purchaser is recorded. No effort is made to insure that the identities and addresses furnished are, in fact, authentic.
- 2) In most cases weapons control procedures utilized by a given firm are set up according to description of weapon by serial number or by date of transaction.
- 3) In cases where customers' names are maintained alphabetically, no index is available which would refer to the particular locality in which that customer resides.
- 4) Purchases made by Chicago area residents for individuals in communities outside the Chicago area may in most cases list only local addresses.

It is noted that on March 9, 1965, [REDACTED] identified above, whose firm is one of the largest gun dealers in the Midwest, advised that based on information available to him, he would estimate that there are approximately 25 firearm dealers in the Chicago, Illinois, area who are known to deal in the sale of weapons on a mail order basis. Of this

number, he said many are considered to deal in large volumes of guns. [redacted] added he could not speculate as to the number of small dealers who have occasion to do business out of state. He extemporaneously furnished a list of eleven known volume dealers which list is maintained by the Chicago Office. Included therein are such firms as Sears Roebuck and Company, Montgomery Ward, and Spiegel's, each of which has a large mail order business throughout the United States in addition to regular retail sales through their various retail outlets.

[redacted] stated that to search records of the many Chicago firms which are recognized as gun outlets would very likely be a monumental task. He explained that not having a description of weapon, date of purchase, identity of buyer, or area to which shipped, would make an exacting search extremely difficult. He noted that by having any of the above information, a search of such records would be facilitated.

For the information of the New Orleans Office and to exemplify the problems encountered in such a record search, it is noted that during a past investigation conducted by the Chicago Office a search of the weapons records of Klein's Sporting Goods was necessitated. This search utilized the services of six individuals for a continuous five-hour period. In connection with this search, the serial number of the weapon in question and that weapon's description were available prior to initiation of this search.

In view of the above, should the New Orleans Office request that the search of gun outlets be made, it is desired that efforts be made to develop further specific information regarding sale and/or shipment of weapons to the named Louisiana communities. Immediately upon receipt of the advice of New Orleans, this search will be initiated at Chicago, Illinois.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FBI

Date: 6/10/65

Transmit the following in ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE (Priority or Method of Mailing)

Via AIRTEL

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP18d/4/2/LL  
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2.4.2.2  
DATE OF REVIEW 6-10-88

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (100-442684)

FROM: SAC, DETROIT (157-768) (P)

REVOLUTIONARY ACTION MOVEMENT  
IS - RAM  
(OO: CHICAGO)

Re Detroit airtel with LHM to the Bureau, dated 6/3/65.

Enclosed for the Bureau are nine copies of an LHM concerning captioned matter. One copy of the LHM being furnished C-2 and two copies of the LHM being furnished U.S. Secret Service, both Detroit, Mich. Two copies are also being furnished Chicago which is office of origin in this matter and two copies are being furnished New Orleans which has an apparent interest in view of mention of "The Deacons for Defense and Justice", which reportedly originated in the State of Louisiana.

The contents of the LHM have been made available to [redacted] and [redacted]

The LHM is being classified confidential since information contained therein could reasonably result in the identification of informants of continuing value and thereby compromise the future effectiveness thereof. 157-2466-

NOT RECORDED

- 3 - Bureau (Enc. 9) (RM) JUN 22 1965
- 2 - Chicago (Enc. 2) (RM)
- 2 - New Orleans (Enc. 2) (RM)
- 4 - Detroit
  - (1 - 157-835 FWHC)
  - (1 - 157-706 POSSIBLE RACIAL VIOLENCE)

FJP/emo  
(11)

1cc & cc LHM  
S08 RB

JUN 12 1965

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ENCLOSURE

JUN 30 1965

Special Agent in Charge

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Per [signature]  
STATE INTR. SEC.

*Barry...  
Rat...*

*Mark...*

*John...*

*157-2466 (RM)*

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DE 157-768

CONFIDENTIAL



This matter is being followed closely by the Detroit Office and the Bureau will be advised of pertinent developments.

CONFIDENTIAL



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Apply, Please Refer to

Detroit, Michigan  
June 10, 1965

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement  
(RAM)

Reference is made to Detroit memorandum dated  
June 3, 1965, captioned as above.

[REDACTED] (c)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
CLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-84 BY SP-8/BJ/18

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EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

[REDACTED] (c)

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REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2.4.2  
DATE OF REVIEW 6-10-83

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downgrading and  
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157-2466-

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Re: Revolutionary Action Movement  
(RAM)

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"Bogalusa, La. - An armed league of Negroes, formed for defense against white terrorism, is spreading across the South.

"The Deacons for Defense and Justice, born last summer in northern Louisiana, has crossed the Mississippi River into Mississippi and Alabama and plan to move into every Southern state.

"The Deacons have guns and they have shown they are willing to use them. Twice in Louisiana they have opened fire on harassing whites.

"The organization raises a hard question for advocates of nonviolence. Should a civil rights organization committed to nonviolence align itself with the Deacons and accept its services, as one organization has done, at least tacitly if not by design?



Re: Revolutionary Action Movement  
(RAM)

"The Deacons are causing concern among law enforcement authorities in Louisiana.

"The organization was formed largely out of a belief that Negroes could not expect impartial treatment from white lawmen and that, if they were to be defended against church burnings, bombings, beatings, killings have to do it themselves.

"Ernest Thomas of Jonesboro, La., 32, the vice president and full-time organizer of the Deacons, said that the organization had 50 to 55 chapters in various stages of organization in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

"He declined to disclose the number of members. Outsiders have guessed from 5,000 to 15,000, he said, but he would not indicate that either figure was correct. The membership, probably, is not large.

\* \* \*

"The main strength is in Louisiana. The incursions across the Mississippi appear to be tentative and exploratory.

"Thomas visited the Deacons in Bogalusa Friday in the wake of the murder of O'Neal Moore, one of Washington Parish's first Negro deputy sheriffs. He was interviewed at the home of Robert Hicks, a Bogalusa Negro leader whose home has become the headquarters of the Bogalusa civil rights movement.

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10 Re: Revolutionary Action Movement  
11 (RAM)

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13 "Richard Haley of New Orleans,  
14 the Southern Director of the Congress  
15 of Racial Equality, participated in  
16 the interview. CORE and the  
17 Deacons are on friendly terms. Many  
18 Deacon chapters are in towns that  
19 have CORE staffers at work.  
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21 "Haley said the connection  
22 between the two organizations began  
23 accidentally at Jonesboro when CORE  
24 discovered that its workers were safer  
25 with the Deacons around.  
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29 "Thomas said the Deacons were  
30 armed with rifles and pistols.  
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32 "'Everybody has his own piece',  
33 he said. The organization provides  
34 ammunition, which it buys in quantity  
35 for savings.  
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37 "Thomas hopes to standardize  
38 weapons to effect further savings.  
39 He favors the 30 - caliber Army  
40 carbine and the 38 - caliber pistol.  
41 Some members have automatic carbines  
42 that will fire 30 rounds like a  
43 machinegun. Most now use shotguns,  
44 Thomas said.  
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46 "Thomas and Haley share a concern  
47 that the Deacons may be painted as  
48 aggressive and trigger happy. They  
49 were organized strictly for defense  
50 and they are highly disciplined,  
51 Thomas said.  
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53 "One of their main jobs is to  
54 protect civil rights workers and  
55

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement  
(RAM)

"volunteers participating civil  
rights activities. A person  
knowingly exposes himself to white  
violence when he walks a picket  
line. But when at night he is  
entitled to rest without worry, and  
that's where the Deacons come in,  
Thomas said.

"With Percy Lee Bradford of  
Jonesboro as president, the Deacons  
were incorporated in March as a non-  
profit corporation in Louisiana."

[REDACTED] (c)

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[REDACTED] (c)

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement  
(RAM)

[REDACTED] <sup>b1</sup> that three of (c)  
the individuals in attendance at this FWHC meeting,  
namely [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] are also local RAM members.

A characterization of RAM is  
contained in the appendix  
hereto.

All unidentified sources utilized in  
the appendix have furnished reliable  
information in the past.

This document contains neither recommendations  
nor conclusions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation  
(FBI). It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to  
your agency; it and its contents are not to be distri-  
buted outside your agency.

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APPENDIX

REVOLUTIONARY ACTION MOVEMENT (RAM)

On November 3, 1964, a source made available a document entitled, "The Revolutionary Action Movement Manifesto", the document having been obtained by the source from an individual known to be a member of RAM.

This document stated, in part, that RAM was officially organized in the Winter of 1963, by Afro-Americans who support the revolutionary objectives of ROBERT F. WILLIAMS, now residing in Cuba, and his concept of organized violence to achieve the liberation of the Afro-American people in the United States. This Manifesto reflected that RAM had oriented its program to one of education and political revolution and the organization of a "black" political party with revolutionary objectives, having recognized the need for a "black revolution" that could and would seize power. RAM philosophy is described in this document as one of revolutionary nationalism, that is, one involving the struggles of the non-white races of the world against exploitation and enslavement by the white capitalist and imperialist nations.

Regarding WILLIAMS, above, it should be noted that on August 28, 1961, a Federal warrant was issued at Charlotte, North Carolina, charging him with Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution for the Crime of Kidnapping. Subsequent to the issuance of this warrant, WILLIAMS fled the United States to Cuba, where he now publishes a monthly newsletter entitled "The Crusader" from Havana.

On November 16, 1965, a second source advised that he learned recently from a RAM member that the organization was begun in Detroit, Michigan, largely under the impetus of DON FREEMAN, Cleveland, Ohio, described as the "Father" of RAM and referred to as RAM's "Black Stalin". FREEMAN now serves as RAM Chairman, with MAXWELL STANFORD, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, serving RAM as Field Chairman. This second source advised that there is no formal headquarters, as such, for RAM at present, but that headquarters are, in effect, with FREEMAN since he plays a dominant role in the leadership and directs the policies and activities of the organization.

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This second source, in September, 1964, advised that RAM is dedicated to the overthrow of the capitalist system in the United States, by violence if necessary, and to its replacement by a socialistic system oriented toward the Chinese Communist interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. RAM is entirely non-white in membership, clandestine in nature, and owes its primary allegiance to the "Bandung World", that is, the non-white races of the world, rather than to any national entity, as such.

To date, according to the second source, in November, 1964, RAM has organized units and membership in several of the larger cities in the United States east of the Mississippi River, and the organization is currently active, attempting to recruit new members and expand its sphere of influence.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TRUE COPY

West Des Moines, Iowa  
June 16, 1965.

b7c

3-1

Dear Mr. Hoover:

Enclosed are some clippings taken from the Des Moines Sunday Register, Des Moines, Iowa, relating to the Deacons, an organization headed up by one Ernest Thomas, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

This organization seems to be patterned after all similar groups such as Minutemen, KKK and similar groups which parade under the guise of being a defensive organizations. It is a Negro organization and purports to take the law into its own hand rather than permit local, state and federal officials and courts to handle this. Armed with high powered weapons, some of which have great fire power, such groups unless kept under rigid surveillance and control could lead to bloodshed and anarchy.

It is also surprising the apparent ease with which these people obtained these weapons when they are denied to the average citizen.

Some of my friends are deeply disturbed by this organization as well as other similar armed mobs. Hence the reason for this letter.

I am not interested in what has been found out about this group but only if it has come to your attention and is receiving investigative attention.

Please be advised your support out this way is very strong and unwavering. People still have the greatest confidence in the FBI and in these troublesome times provides an anchor to which people can tie.

Wishing you many more years of continued success.

Very truly yours,

X Agent

JUN 23 1965

XEROX

JUL 7 1965

PERS. REC. UNIT

HERBERTS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 7-16-86 BY SP10/BJA

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[REDACTED] b7C  
Wentworth, Iowa  
June 16, 1965

Dear Mr. Hoover,

Enclosed are some clippings  
taken from the Des Moines Sunday  
Register, Des Moines, Iowa, relating  
to the Deacons, an organization  
headed up by one Ernest Thomas,  
Des Moines, Iowa.

This organization seems to be  
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etc. and similar groups which  
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vigilante organization and purports  
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to handle this. Armed with high  
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and anxiety.  
It is also surprising the apparent  
ease with which these people  
obtained these weapons when  
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citizen.

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your attention and is receiving  
investigative attention.

Please be advised your support  
in this way is very strong and  
unwavering. People still have the  
greatest confidence in the FBI and  
in those troublesome territories provided  
a anchor to which people can tie.  
Wishing you many more  
years of continued success,  
Very truly yours,

[Redacted Signature]

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*Jes Moines Sunday Register, June 6, 1963*

# ARMED DIXIE NEGRO LEAGUE IS SPREADING

## 50 Chapters Now In 3 States

By Roy Reed  
New York Times News Service

BOGALUSA, LA.—An armed league of Negroes, formed to defend Negroes against white terrorism, is spreading across the South.

The Deacons for Defense and Justice, born last summer in northern Louisiana, has crossed the Mississippi River to Mississippi and Alabama and plans to move into every Southern state.

The Deacons have guns and they have shown they are willing to use them. Twice in Louisiana they have opened fire on harassing whites.

The organization raises a hard question for advocates of non-violence. Should a civil rights organization committed to non-violence align itself with the Deacons and accept its services, as one organization has done, at least tacitly if not by design?

### Doubt Law

The Deacons are causing concern among law enforcement authorities in Louisiana. The organization was formed largely out of a belief that Negroes could not expect impartial treatment from white lawmen and that, if they were to be defended against church burnings, bombings, beatings, killings and terrorism, they would have to do it themselves.

Earnest Thomas of Jonesboro, La., the 32-year-old vice-president and organizer of the Deacons, said Friday that the organization had 50 to 55 chapters in various stages of organization in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

He declined to disclose the number of members. Outsiders have guessed from 5,000 to 15,000, he said, but he would not indicate that either figure was correct.

The main strength is in Louisiana. The incursions across the Mississippi appear to be tentative and exploratory, with considerable organizational work still to be done.

Thomas said the Deacons could spread to every Southern state in six or seven months, "with hard work."

### Visits Members

Thomas visited the Deacons in Bogalusa Friday in the wake

DEACONS —

*Continued on Page Eight*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP7/gj/ff

*100-4466-15*

# ARMED WITH RIFLES, PISTOLS

## DEACONS---

*Continued from Page One*

of the murder of O'Neal Moore, one of Washington Parish's first Negro deputy sheriffs. Many Deacon chapters are in towns that have CORE staffers at work.

Richard Haley of New Orleans, the southern director of the Congress of Racial Equality, said the connection between the two organizations began accidentally at Jonesboro when CORE discovered that its workers were safer with the Deacons around.

Thomas said the Deacons were armed with rifles and pistols.

"Everybody owns his own piece," he said. The organization provides ammunition, which it buys in quantity for savings.

He hopes to standardize weapons to effect further savings. He favors the 30-caliber Army carbine and the 38-caliber pistol. Some members have automatic carbines that will fire 30 rounds like a machine gun. Most now use shotguns, Thomas said.

Thomas and Haley share a concern that the Deacons may be painted as aggressive and trigger-happy. They were organized strictly for defense and they are highly disciplined, Thomas said.

One of their main jobs is to protect civil rights workers and volunteers participating in civil rights activities. A person knowingly exposes himself to white violence when he walks a picket line. But when he goes to bed at night he is entitled to rest without worry, and that's where the Deacons come in, Thomas said.

### Started in March

Wm Percy Lee Bradford of Jonesboro is president. The Deacons were incorporated in

March as a non-profit corporation in Louisiana.

The idea started last summer in Jonesboro after a Ku Klux Klan parade through a Negro street, Thomas said. He said the Klan rode through the street throwing out leaflets with a Jonesboro police escort.

"We decided that if the power structure would do that for the Klan, then we had better do

something for ourselves," he said.

### \$25,000 AWARD

BOGALUSA, LA. (AP)—Gov. John J. McKeithen, in a tough mood over racial troubles here, offered a \$25,000 cash reward Saturday to help crack the ambush slaying of a Negro deputy.

McKeithen, after meeting with the ranking investigators in the slaying of Washington Parish Deputy O'Neal Moore, met with

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REC-92

157-2760-15

June 22, 1965

[Redacted]

b7c

West Des Moines, Iowa

Dear [Redacted]

Your letter of June 16th has been received, and it was good to hear from you. Your best wishes and the confidence in the work being handled by the Bureau expressed in your letter are also deeply appreciated.

Thank you for forwarding the newspaper clippings. Your observations are being made a matter of record.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

NOTE: Correspondent is on the Special Correspondents' List. He EOD [Redacted] and retired [Redacted]. His file is satisfactory. [Redacted] DCL/ufp The Deacons for Defense and Justice are subject of Bufile 157-246 (3)

MAILED 25  
JUN 22 1965  
COMM-FBI

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 7-16-80 BY SP/gh/jk T. K. K.

[Handwritten signature]

*Bob [unclear]*  
*Pat [unclear]*  
*med 3-1*

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DATE OF REVIEW 6/15/88  
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8/21/88

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_

(Type in plaintext or code)

AIRTEL

AIR MAIL - REGISTERED

(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI  
FROM: SAC, LOS ANGELES (157-1184)(P)  
RE: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE  
aka "The Deacons;"  
CHARLES SIMS, Spokesman  
RACIAL MATTERS  
OO: New Orleans

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP/SL/LS 7/1/80  
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2.4.2  
DATE OF REVIEW 6/15/88

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight (8) copies of a letterhead memorandum (LHM) setting out observations of SA [redacted] who viewed Los Angeles TV Channel 11, Sunday night, 6/13/65 observing the "LOUIS LOMAX Show." CHARLES SIMS from Bogalusa, Louisiana, who claimed to be the spokesman for "The Deacons" was the featured guest. Xerox copies of two newspaper articles appearing in the "Los Angeles Times" dated 6/13 and 14/65 were made a part of this LHM. It is noted that one newspaper article reported that "The Deacons" had machine guns and other weapons in their private arsenal. Three copies of the LHM are enclosed for New Orleans. Locally, copies of the LHM are being sent to Region II, 115th L.T.C., Pasadena; Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Unit, Los Angeles and Secret Service, Los Angeles.

6/14/65 [redacted] SA [redacted] orally on (C)  
bl b7C

- 3 - Bureau (Encls. 3) ENCLOSURE
  - 2 - New Orleans (Encls. 3) (AM-REGISTERED)
  - 3 - Los Angeles
- (1 - [redacted])  
MIB:bjjs  
(6)

7-2466-16  
12 JUN 17 1965

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC. SER.;  
DIPT: ISD, CRD, RAO

DATE FORW: 6-15-65  
HOW FORW: RIS  
BY: J.F.M./59

lcc & cc LHM

808/RB

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

53 JUN 23 1965

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LA 157-1184

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[REDACTED] b1

It is being noted that subsequent to the appearance of SIMS on the foregoing described TV program, anonymous telephone protests were received at the Los Angeles Office complaining as to the aims and arms of SIMS and "The Deacons" which indicated to them the formation of a "Negro KKK."

LEAD

LOS ANGELES

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. Will report the departure of SIMS from Los Angeles.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Los Angeles, California

June 15, 1965

Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE,  
also known as "The Deacons;"  
CHARLES SIMS, Spokesman  
RACIAL MATTERS

EX APPROX 1119

A Special Agent of the FBI viewed the "Louis Lomax TV Show," Channel 11, Los Angeles, California, beginning 11 p.m., Sunday night, June 13, 1965. Charles Sims, the featured guest, described himself as "The Man" in "The Deacons" in Bogalusa, Louisiana, saying he was 41 years old, a native of Bogalusa, Louisiana, had finished one year of high school, had served four years and five months in the U. S. Army attaining the rank of Technical Sergeant. He had sold industrial insurance prior to becoming associated with "The Deacons" and currently is working as an underwriter for a builders' insurance group.

Sims was observed to be a male, Negro, graying at the temples, balding on the top of his head and a scar was noticed in the middle of his chin. He appeared to be about 5'10" and of medium build.

Sims stated that "The Deacons" were organized about six months ago and that now there are from 50 to 60 chapters in three or four states. He declined to give the total numerical membership. He claimed "The Deacons" were organized for the purpose of protecting civil rights workers who could not obtain protection from local law enforcement authorities.

Sims stated that "The Deacons" are armed and are buying more arms with which to defend themselves. He admitted he is aware that it is not legal for them to carry weapons, but that he "would rather be caught with a weapon than without one in Bogalusa."

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ENCLOSURE

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3 DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE,  
4 also known as "The Deacons;"  
5 CHARLES SIMS, Spokesman  
6 RACIAL MATTERS  
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14 He voiced the opinion that in the event of "trouble" that "blood  
15 would be flowing down the streets like water." He claimed he  
16 could rally 100 armed men within fifteen minutes notice and had  
17 done so previously. He claimed he had used his gun twice but did  
18 not elaborate.

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20 Any suggestions made to this program while Sims was  
21 being interviewed which favored "non-violence" were unacceptable  
22 to Sims and to the audience who applauded Sims wildly with Lomax  
23 commending Sims.

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25 At the conclusion of the program, Lomax stated Sims  
26 would spend the next few days in Los Angeles meeting with various  
27 civil rights organizations.

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33 A newspaper article entitled "Negro 'Deacons' Claim  
34 They Have Machine Guns, Grenades for 'War'", and dated June 13,  
35 1965 appeared in the "Los Angeles Times," "Exclusive to The  
36 Times from a Staff Writer," was copied and is a part of the  
37 letterhead memorandum.

38  
39 A second newspaper article entitled "Deacons Chief  
40 Defends Aims on Visit to L.A." appeared in the "Los Angeles  
41 Times" dated June 14, 1965 which was the results of an interview  
42 with Sims by Times Staff Writer Paul Weeks, also was copied  
43 and made a part of this letterhead memorandum.

44  
45 This document contains neither recommendations nor  
46 conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is  
47 loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be  
48 distributed outside your agency.  
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# Negro 'Deacons' Claim They Have Machine Guns, Grenades for 'War'

Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer

BOGALUSA, La.—At two secret meetings, both attended by representatives of the Council of Racial Equality, Deacons for Defense and Justice claimed to have machine guns and grenades for use in racial warfare.

The Los Angeles Times learned that the Bogalusa chapter of the armed Negro vigilante group discussed the use of those and other military-type weapons at its organizational meeting last night and again at a meeting the following day.

The Deacons insist their purpose is only defensive, however, at least February meetings they talked of preventing whites from going into Negro residential areas at night.

They also proposed making sure Negroes get fair

trials and having armed confrontations with policemen when Negroes are arrested.

The rising militancy of the Deacons and the expansion of the movement is a new element in the civil rights struggle which federal and state officials view with increasing concern.

In Bogalusa a veteran police officer said: "They are flirting with danger. The other night there was a little commotion and rumors of trouble in the colored community. The Deacons hopped in their cars and went zipping around the streets.

"If they keep that up they are bound to run into trouble."

CORE has co-operated with the Deacons in civil rights work in Bogalusa and Jonesboro. The secret order

of Deacons was organized in Jonesboro last summer, reportedly with the aid of CORE members, to protect Negroes and civil rights workers from armed racists.

Earnest Thomas, 32, of Jonesboro, an official and full-time organizer of the Deacons, has told newsmen that there are now 50 to 55 chapters in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. Fund-raising units are being established in San Francisco, New York and other large cities, he said.

Thomas and another official of the parent group, Frederick Douglas Kirkpatrick, a high school coach in Jonesboro, came to Bogalusa in February to organize the local chapter.

With them were two white CORE workers—Steve Hill

Please Turn to Pg. 10, Col. 1

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

A-1 Los Angeles Times  
Los Angeles, Calif.

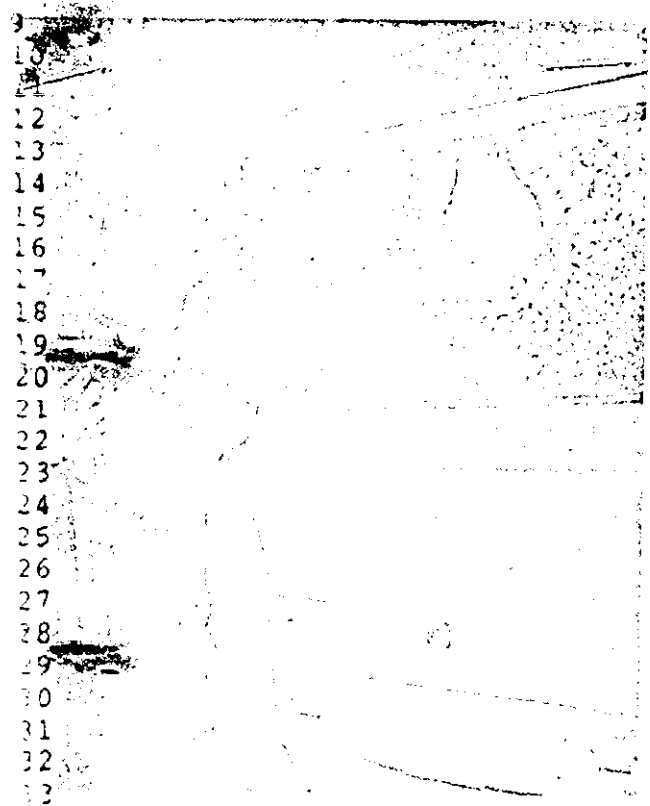
Date: 6/13/65  
Edition: Final  
Author:  
Editor: Nick B. Williams  
Title: Deacons For Defense & JUSTICE

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Classification:  
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

Being Investigated

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34 SURVEYS DAMAGE—Robert Hicks, vice president of Bogalusa Voters League, surveys damage to car parked in front of his house which he said was fired from passing auto. He returned gunfire.

35 of San Francisco and Antioch College in Boston, a former Cornell professor.

36 ss than three weeks before the organizational meeting were shot at and beaten by racists in Bogalusa.

37 the night of April 7 Yates stayed at the home of Robert Hicks when he fired back at whites (shot at his home.)

38 Combat 'Inevitable' the organizational fighting, Kirkpatrick discussed racial combat as learned.

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Both Sims and Hicks refused to tell a Times reporter whether Bogalusa Deacons are armed with machine guns and other military-type weapons.

"You know better than to ask me questions like that," said Sims.

Hicks said, "You don't tell your opponents what you're doing in any kind of conflict."

#### Powerful Weapons Urged

Kirkpatrick warned the new Deacons against the tendency to buy something cheap, like a little old .22-caliber rifle. He said, "That's no weapon—you need high-powered rifles."

"If you gonna use a pistol," he said, "use a .38. A shotgun is good to have for close-distance firing."

Deacons standardized their weapons, he said, making it practical to buy ammunition by the case.

"If you got only three or four bullets," he said, "you're out of the fight before it starts. Keep plenty of ammo at your house, in your car wherever you are. Be ready. I carry with me most all the time a hundred rounds."

Thomas interjected, "We have contacts in Chicago and

Houston for automatic weapons—for .50-caliber and .30-caliber."

Someone asked, "What's that, machine guns?"

"Yeah—and we got grenades too," Thomas said. "We want to be ready if they want to be violent."

#### Radio Communications

Thomas explained that Deacons pay \$10 initiation fees and \$2 a month dues to their local chapters, which in turn pay the parent organization \$100, plus 10% of dues. In return, he said, the parent group helps equip local chapters with two-way radio equipment.

The same week the Bogalusa chapter was formed, other Louisiana units were being established in Baton Rouge, New Iberia and Plaquemine.

Thomas told the Bogalusa group that Deacons chapters have inter-city radio communications so they can call for reinforcements in case of emergencies.

The use of walkie-talkies for patrol work was described by Yates and Miller, the CORE workers.

Kirkpatrick said Deacons would not "protect the man who is in the wrong," but would want to "check things out and make sure he gets a fair trial."

"The whites will pester you," commented one Deacon, "but when they see the hardware, they will take cover."

#### 400 Attend Meeting

The mass meeting the following day was attended by about 400 persons. The grounds around the union hall were heavily patrolled by Deacons. No newsmen were present.

The formation of the Bogalusa chapter was announced by Hicks, who said that CORE had brought two officials of the Deacons from Jonesboro to organize the unit.

Hicks said the Bogalusa chapter would be "the same as in Jonesboro. They got radios, walkie-talkies, grenades, gas bombs, M-1 rifles. They set up a patrol system for the Negro community."

With the Deacons patrolling, Hicks said, "No white person will be allowed in a Negro area at night—salesmen or anybody." Thunderous applause and cheers greeted that remark.