

1 that. A It is a classera.

2 Q How did you happen to come here today?

3 A Mr. Wong told me he had an appointment down here,  
4 and Mr. Wong gets very excited and he asked me more or less,  
5 he said, "Well, would you sit with me and talk to them?  
6 Will you tell these people what happened that I can't tell?"

7 because he gets nervous. That's why, that is what I am  
8 doing down here today.

9 A Your CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Any further questions,

10 gentlemen? Thank you very much.

11 what you saw during the civil (Witness excused) in July  
12 and in particular having - - - thing to do with law enforcement

13 Whereupon,

14 A Pertaining to ENEZ KING Trooper.

15 called as a witness, first duly sworn, testified as follows:

16 A It was CHAIRMAN LILLEY: We appreciate your coming

17 here, Mrs. King. We went to bed that night,

18 Saturday night, and in the morning about three, three-thirty,

19 something around there with glass breaking. From our

By Mr. Fortunato:

20 Q Can you tell us your home address, please?

21 A I live at 473 Avon Avenue, Newark, establishment.

22 Q Do you in conjunction with your husband have a  
23 business? it was taken. It was about \$250 taken out of the

24 A Yes, sir. in riots; it was the State Troopers.

25 Q And what is that business?

1 A It is a cleaners.

2 Q And where is that located?

3 A At the same address.

4 Q Your husband was scheduled to be here this  
5 evening as well. Where is he?

6 A He couldn't make it. He has to run the business.  
7 Someone has to stay there.

8 Q How long have you been in business at that address?

9 A Four years.

10 Q Do you have anything to relate to us regarding  
11 what you saw during the civil disorder in Newark in July  
12 and in particular having anything to do with law enforcement  
13 officials?

14 A Pertaining to a State Trooper.

15 Q You tell us.

16 A I am not sure that was the color of their uniform.

17 It was on a Sunday morning. We went to bed that night,  
18 Saturday night, and we woke up about three, three-thirty,  
19 something around there, with glass breaking. From our

20 bedroom we could see into our store. We saw the State  
21 Troopers when they entered our store, our establishment.

22 They ransacked the place, and we forgot to take some money  
23 out, but it was taken. It was about \$250 taken out of the  
24 store. It wasn't in riots; it was the State Troopers.

25 Q Where were you when you saw this?

1       A    In my bedroom, looking out my bedroom window. My  
2 bedroom is right behind the store, and there is a window  
3 where I can see from my bedroom right into the whole store.

4       Q    Were there any lights at that time?

5       A    Yes, sir. We keep lights on in the store.

6       Q    The lights were on in the store? They were not  
7 shot out?

8       A    The five-hour service we had was shot out, but we  
9 could still see because we had the flourescent lights in  
10 the store which weren't shot out. They was up higher.

11      Q    Can you describe the people that were in the store?

12      A    Can I describe the people?

13      Q    That you refer to as State Troopers. What did  
14 they look like in terms of their dress?

15      A    They had their uniforms on. I think they were  
16 grey. I am not sure that was the color of them, but they  
17 were in uniforms, State Trooper, they was white State  
18 Troopers. They were men, you know.

19      Q    Can you tell us anything about their appearance?  
20 Was there anything on their heads?

21      A    Hats. They took the clothes with the hats of

22      Q    What kind?

23      A    I know they have helmets, or what do you call them?  
24 Some of them have helmets, you know, the hard helmets. I  
25 can't give you a definite answer on that because I wasn't

1 worrying about what they looked like and what they dressed.

2 They Q I would appreciate if you can help us as much as  
3 you can. Do you recall the color of the helmets?

4 A No, not right off-hand I don't know.

5 Q Were there any markings on these uniforms?

6 A They had State Troopers and numbers. I couldn't  
7 tell you that.

8 Q On the uniforms they had State Troopers?

9 A Telling you they was like the Newark policemen.  
10 They have --

11 Q Shoulder pads?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Did you see the State Trooper emblem?

14 A Oh, yes, you can see them on there.

15 Q How many were there?

16 A I couldn't say. There might have been maybe three  
17 or four. I am not sure.

18 Q Could you now describe for us in somewhat more  
19 detail as to what you saw them do?

20 A When we heard the glass break, we got up to look  
21 out the window. They took the clothes with the butts of  
22 their guns, knocked them off the rack and just went around  
23 knocking things around. We have an old fashioned cash  
24 register where you can't use the numbers. There is a little  
25 piece on the top where you push and the drawer comes out.

1 They were banging on everything. By accident they hit it.  
2 They opened it. One came over and took the money, and  
3 then they looked around and words were saying, "There is  
4 nothing else left here. Let's go."

5 Q Did you have anything on your store?

6 A The name of the business?

7 Q Specifically did you have anything dealing with  
8 Soul Brother or Soul Sister?

9 A Yes, on the windows.

10 Q Who placed that on the windows?

11 A Who did it there? I think my husband did. I am  
12 not sure.

13 Q Why did you do that?

14 A I think because mostly the people in the neighbor-  
15 hood was doing it and we just figured we would do it, too.

16 Q After you finished watching the State Troopers,  
17 what did you do?

18 A When they went out the door, then we heard shots  
19 so we hit the floor. We got down on the floor. I have a  
20 two year old daughter and she was in the next room sleeping.  
21 We crawled into the bedroom, her bedroom, got the baby and  
22 crawled out of our kitchen up the back stairs into our third  
23 floor apartment we have rented out. When we got up there we  
24 put her to bed. Then we continued looking out the window  
25 because I am very nosy. I have to see what is going on.

1 Q Can you tell us what you saw?

2 A When we got to the window the tenants were already  
3 looking. They had informed us the State Troopers had  
4 knocked the window down. We told them we saw them. We  
5 looked out the window.

6 They got in the middle of the street, Avon Avenue, and  
7 they shot back into the store, plus they were shooting up.  
8 There was a candy store there also and a lounge across  
9 the street from in front of us. They started open firing,  
10 shooting up the places that was around.

11 Q Can you describe what they were firing with?

12 A I guess they were rifles and some guns they have  
13 in the holster. I couldn't tell you what kind they was.  
14 All I know is they was guns.

15 Q How many of them?

16 A Let me see. On South Eighteenth Street on the  
17 side of my house was three cars and in each car there was  
18 about four State Troopers to a car. All the State Troopers  
19 came out of their cars, and one car, the first car went  
20 across Avon Avenue and parked over in front of Mr. Wonderful  
21 Lounge and they started shooting every which way. They  
22 started shooting back in our store, the candy store, and  
23 the lounge, Mr. Wonderful's Lounge.

24 Q Did you see the numbers on the cars?

25 A Yes. Not license numbers. They have great big

1 numbers on the tops of the car. By being up so high and  
2 by the tops of the cars being white, we could see the big  
3 letters they had on the cars.

4 Q Were the street lights on?

5 A The street lights? Yes, there were street lights  
6 there.

7 Q What were the numbers?

8 A 530, 535 and 491. I won't forget them.

9 Q Did you see any other incidents that evening or  
10 thereafter?

11 A After they had got through having fun, they said,  
12 "Well, we got those niggers. Let's go." So they got in  
13 their cars and went up South Eighteenth Street. About  
14 twenty minutes, twenty-five minutes the Newark Police came,  
15 saw what happened. They checked the windows and everything,  
16 so they got in their cars and pulled off, the Newark Police.  
17 They just got back in their cars and pulled off.

18 Q Checked what windows?

19 A They checked the stores to see if anybody was in  
20 them I guess.

21 Q Did you have a visit from the sheriff's department?

22 A Yes. I think it was a few days or a couple of  
23 days later. I am not sure.

24 Q What occasioned that visit?

25 A Pertaining to the riot, the shooting up of my store

1 because my husband was very angry and by seeing the State  
2 Troopers doing it, we put boards up in the windows. On  
3 the boards it said, "Windows were broke out on one side by  
4 State Troopers," with the numbers of the cars and then on  
5 the other one was, "State Trooper shot this glass out,"  
6 and then it had the numbers we had seen. We had quite a  
7 bit of visitors.

8 Q Have you heard anything back from the sheriff's  
9 department of anyone else as to what is being done?

10 A No. You are the first ones we had talked to, I  
11 mean coming down to the office talking about this.

12 Q You did give a statement to someone from Newark  
13 Legal Services? this is the way I felt, and I didn't

14 A I gave it to the Legal Aid and my lawyer also,  
15 and he is going to see what he can do for us because as  
16 far as I am concerned I don't think anybody is going to do  
17 anything but my lawyer.

18 Q Will you tell us the name of your attorney?

19 A John Love.

20 Q Is this covered by insurance, the damage?

21 A I think the only thing that was insured was the  
22 windows, but everything else, we couldn't get the insurance  
23 we wanted.

24 Q Have you been paid for that damage?

25 A No, sir. the condition of the stores was at that



1 Q Are you going to continue doing business in Newark  
2 at that address? it is the curfew, after the curfew, at

3 A Oh, yes. I am not going out of Newark; I am going  
4 to stay right there. could come down during or call the police

5 Q What is your feeling about all this and in  
6 particular toward the State Troopers and law enforcement  
7 officials?

8 A I don't know his name, the State Trooper who  
9 came from Trenton to talk to us, and I was there. My  
10 husband is not there in the daytime. He works out. I  
11 told them if nobody was in my house and my daughter was  
12 out the house and I had a machine gun I think I would have  
13 used it because this is the way I felt, and I didn't  
14 deserve it because I wasn't in the riot area at all. I think  
15 the riot was from South Tenth Street back down Avon Avenue,  
16 and we were two blocks from the Irvington line and there was  
17 nothing going on. out then shooting up the place?

18 Q Prior to this incident were all the stores on those  
19 streets intact? my husband and I don't bother you any longer

20 A Yes, sir. We worked everyday from the day the  
21 riot happened right to going to work. We worked all day  
22 Saturdays. We worked up until seven-thirty Saturday, and  
23 most of the stores, one of the stores there was all right.

24 Q That Sunday morning did you take a walk up the  
25 street to see what the condition of the stores was at that

1 time? Q Who owns these stores in your area? Are they all  
2 owned by I think it is the curfew, after the curfew, six  
3 o'clock. We came down off the third floor because we were  
4 scared that if we should come down during or call the police  
5 we would be accused of being the rioters in our own place,  
6 which they wouldn't have had no idea it was ours. Maybe  
7 they would have shot us. I wouldn't know, but we didn't  
8 give them no -- we didn't come down until six o'clock,  
9 and then we came down and saw everything. There was quite  
10 a bit of neighbors around the neighborhood that had saw  
11 about the same time we did.

12 you. Q Is what went on the subject of much discussion  
13 among your neighbors? got his --

14 A Yes. Of course, it would be.

15 did Q Has this come up in connection with meeting a  
16 life, so he took my daughter and I and sent us to meet  
17 person or have you had meetings about it?

18 A What, about them shooting up the place?

19 his Q Yes.

20 A No. My husband and I don't bother too many people.  
21 What we do we do between ourselves. If we are going to do  
22 anything, we do it between ourselves. We don't like to pull  
23 the people into anything. We don't go to organizations,  
24 don't belong to any, and we don't bother. When we get hurt,  
25 we know how to do this, but we don't like to. We just like  
to make our living.

1 have to  
2 Q Who owns these stores in your area? Are they all  
3 owned by Negroes or some of them owned by whites?

4 A Right on South Eighteenth Street there is a candy  
5 store, a grocery store and the bar that is across the street.  
6 That is owned by Negroes, and then there is a gas station  
7 which is owned by the white man right in that vicinity.

8 Q Did these businesses all have the sign "Soul  
9 Brother" or "Soul Sister" on their windows?

10 A Yes.

11 Q The gas station included?

12 A No, the gas station got his, but I couldn't tell  
13 you. I couldn't tell you when we got ours.

14 Q When you say got his --

15 A Maybe the people in the neighborhood or somebody  
16 did that. I couldn't say. My husband was afraid for our  
17 life, so he took my daughter and I and sent us to Montclair.  
18 When we came back home we heard of the gas station getting  
19 his windows broke out.

20 Q Did the gas station have Soul Brother or Soul  
21 Sister on it?

22 A No, not that I know of. It didn't have at the time  
23 I was there. Only a bar. It was up on Nineteenth Street,  
24 and it was owned by a white man and he put it on there and  
25 he got it, too. Right across the street from him a man  
owns a grocery store and he didn't get touched. He didn't

1 have it on his window. I didn't know if we should have talked

2 Q You don't recall who it was from the State Police  
3 that came to talk with you? You say there was a State

4 A No, I don't, not right off-hand. ... Trustee?

5 Q Do you know when that was? ... I don't know his name.

6 A It could have been about three weeks later, after  
7 the riot. Maybe less. ... About three weeks after the riot.

8 Q Did you or your husband report this incident to  
9 the State Police? GIBBONS: Did anybody from the ...

10 A No, we didn't report it to anybody. Everybody just  
11 looked like they came to us. We didn't call the police up  
12 after it happened. Sunday morning we never even got in  
13 touch with the police. We didn't know what to do. So we  
14 didn't get in touch with anybody about it. They just came  
15 to us. ... people from the sheriff's department.

16 MR. GIBBONS: Did you give a statement to the  
17 Newark Legal Services?

18 THE WITNESS: Yes. ... at the board up that ...

19 MR. GIBBONS: Who arranged for that?

20 THE WITNESS: People just came in. We didn't  
21 go to no one. You know, like they had young girls  
22 and boys just going around to different stores

23 We got it ... that had Soul Brother written on them, and who got  
24 out, got shot up at the time, they sent somebody  
25 This was from the office up to see us and we talked to them

1 my husband about it. We didn't know if we should have talked  
2 neighborhood who did this. They shot right through the  
to them.

3 board because MR. GIBBONS: You say there was a State  
4 Trooper that came to see you from Trenton?

5 THE WITNESS: Yes, and I don't know his name.

6 MR. GIBBONS: When was that?

7 THE WITNESS: About three weeks after the riot.  
8 I am not sure.

9 MR. GIBBONS: Did anybody from the federal  
10 government come to see you?

11 THE WITNESS: The sheriff's department I think  
12 is the only one other than the State Trooper. I  
13 think the sheriff's office was there during that  
14 week. I think during that week they came there,  
15 people from the sheriff's department.

16 MR. GIBBONS: When did your husband put up the  
17 signs?

18 THE WITNESS: He put the board up that Sunday,  
19 and he wrote it on that Sunday afternoon.

20 By Mr. Fortunato:

21 Q What signs are you referring to now?

22 A That is the one shot out by the State Troopers.

23 We got it again that Sunday night. We went to bed Sunday  
24 night and Monday morning we was woke back up with nine shots.  
25 This was from a shotgun, and people in the neighborhood plus

1 my husband saw all this done. This was a boy in the  
2 neighborhood who did this. They shot right through the  
3 board because the board had nine holes in it.

4 They MR. GIBBONS: But you know that was a boy  
5 in the neighborhood?

6 THE WITNESS: That was a boy in the neighbor-  
7 hood. Where we live we can see almost anything.

8 MR. LEUCHTER: Have there been any sniping  
9 activity in the neighborhood before the riots?

10 THE WITNESS: Saturday night. We were kind of  
11 brave and sitting on our porch in front of our  
12 store. I think this was just about before the  
13 curfew. I think the curfew was ten o'clock. We  
14 were sitting out there, my husband and the man  
15 who owns the grocery store and the man that was  
16 in the candy store and several friends of ours.  
17 All of a sudden there was a State Trooper up on  
18 Nineteenth Street shot this way. It hit the gas  
19 station and tinged off the gas station. We run.  
20 By us going through our store to get to our  
21 apartment, the clothes were moving. By the time  
22 we got into our apartment the National Guards, I  
23 think there could have been about 300 of them in  
24 about ten minutes who was there in that area. They  
25 said, "There is somebody in that store. There is

1 one of them rioters in there trying to do  
2 something." There was only my husband that went  
3 through. I thought, "Oh, Lord! Here they come."  
4 They tried the door and they looked in and they  
5 couldn't get in.

6 Then they decided to lay out in the street  
7 and whatever they do in combat. They get down and  
8 wait to see if somebody was coming up. There was

9 A nobody around but the State Troopers and the  
10 National Guard.

11 MR. LEUCHTER: This was early that night?

12 THE WITNESS: That lasted maybe about twenty

13 Q minutes. Then somebody hollered, "Okay, let's go,"

14 A and they left. From that time on until about two

15 I look or three o'clock in the morning -- no, I would say  
16 going to it was about one o'clock when we went to bed. We

17 stayed in the windows and looked out and there was

18 THE WITNESS: I was here and

19 National Guard. The Newark Police never got

20 around that area. I never seen one.

21 MR. LEUCHTER: Had anybody earlier that night  
22 or on previous nights fired, or had there been any  
23 shots in the neighborhood fired at the State Police?

24 THE WITNESS: I think you are referring to the  
25 people other than the law. No, there wasn't any

1 that I know of. I think they had them all scared.  
2 I think they had a lot of sense to stay in  
3 instead of going out because we have a pretty  
4 good neighborhood up there, and we are not the  
5 kind that is like down the hill. That's why there  
6 was no shots other than just that one incident.

7 By Mr. Fortunato:

8 Q Can you tell us what your education is?

9 A My husband is educating me. I went to school,  
10 but I didn't like school so I got out when I was about 15,  
11 and I left home when I was 16. So when I got married my  
12 husband decided to give me some education.

13 Q How old are you now?

14 A Thirty-two. I am not afraid to say my age because  
15 I look younger. I haven't got much education, but I am  
16 going to get it.

17 MR. MEYNER: Where are you from originally?

18 THE WITNESS: I was born on a reservation in  
19 upstate New York before the thruway came through.

20 MR. MEYNER: What reservation?

21 THE WITNESS: Don't ask me the names.

22 MR. MEYNER: Indian reservation?

23 THE WITNESS: I am Apache Indian. You might  
24 say I am the only one around.

25 MR. MEYNER: What is the nature of this



1 business? Do you take in garments for dry people  
2 cleaning and somebody picks them up, brings them  
3 back?

4 THE WITNESS: I tell you, before the riot  
5 this was a drop store. Now it is not a drop  
6 store anymore; it is a plant. We have our own  
7 plant where we do our own cleaning and pressing  
8 right there. It has been about a month now since  
9 we had our own machinery.

10 MR. MEYNER: Did you switch from the company  
11 that was doing the work?

12 THE WITNESS: Yes.

13 MR. MEYNER: So now you process it all  
14 yourself?

15 THE WITNESS: We do it ourselves.

16 MR. MEYNER: You do the pressing and spotting?

17 THE WITNESS: Yes. We do everything that one  
18 of the big plants would if you send it out.

19 MR. MEYNER: How about your business, is it  
20 about the same or better or worse?

21 THE WITNESS: It is much better, of course,  
22 when you are doing your own. You don't have to  
23 pay somebody else that money.

24 MR. MEYNER: I am talking about the people  
25 that come into your store.

1 THE WITNESS: We still have the same people  
2 in the neighborhood plus more because we dealt  
3 with hotels, big hotels and the Wigway Towers and  
4 things like that, high class people.

5 MR. MEYNER: You mean you went around and  
6 picked their stuff up and brought it in?

7 THE WITNESS: Yes, and then delivered it  
8 back to them.

9 MR. MEYNER: Before this you sent the stuff  
10 out for cleaning?

11 THE WITNESS: We sent it out to another plant,  
12 but we also had that picked up and delivery service.  
13 We just continue. We have our own machines.

14 MR. MEYNER: How much of a family do you have,  
15 just the child? About twenty feet.

16 THE WITNESS: Just the three of us, my husband,  
17 my daughter and myself.

18 MR. MEYNER: How old is your daughter?

19 THE WITNESS: My daughter is two. She will  
20 be three in February.

21 MR. MEYNER: Did you actually see the police  
22 reach in, take the money and put it in their pocket?

23 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir. I actually seen them  
24 when they took -- both my husband and I. I don't  
25 know why we left it in there. I guess we figured

1 nothing would happen that far because we went to  
2 bed like there wasn't nothing happening. That was  
3 it.

4 MR. MEYNER: When you saw this, how far away  
5 were you?

6 THE WITNESS: My window, here is the window  
7 here (indicating). This store is right here. I  
8 am looking at you. I don't know how to describe  
9 it.

10 MR. LEUCHTER: Would the cash register be  
11 where I am or farther away from where you were?

12 THE WITNESS: I think the cash register would  
13 be from where I am to that pole or divider right  
14 there.

15 MR. MEYNER: About twenty feet.

16 THE WITNESS: It is not that big a place.

17 MR. MEYNER: How was it they didn't see you  
18 then?

19 THE WITNESS: I managed not to let them see  
20 me. There is clothes there, and I think by them  
21 coming in just doing what they were doing,  
22 destructive, taking their guns and knocking clothes  
23 down, they wasn't looking.

24 MR. MEYNER: Were you on the same floor?

25 THE WITNESS: As my store, yes sir. I live

1 right in back of it.

2 MR. MEYNER: Were you looking through a  
3 window?

4 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir, a window.

5 MR. MEYNER: You have a room in back of the  
6 store; you are looking through the window?

7 THE WITNESS: Yes.

8 MR. MEYNER: But isn't there clothing between  
9 you and the cash register?

10 THE WITNESS: No. If you saw it now there is  
11 no room. Before we got the machine there was a

12 lot of room. The way we had it was the racks were  
13 like four racks in a row. You could see the whole

14 thing. You could look out my bedroom window on

15 Avon Avenue because we didn't have nothing in the

16 way. Nighttime when we got through working they

17 wouldn't be hanging because we have all the work

18 off this rack and put on the other racks. It would

19 be clear.

20 MR. MEYNER: Was there any indication that  
21 evening these police saw you?

22 THE WITNESS: No, there wasn't any because I  
23 think they would have come and got us if they saw

24 us.

25 MR. MEYNER: Was there a light on in the back?

THE WITNESS: No, sir, we had no light back

see me." there. It is mighty dark back there. We have a  
reason I burglar alarm system. They have got bars inside

Q with wires. You can look. You can't see too

A good inside the apartment because by it being

paper. I dark we could see more inside than they could see

Q into our bedroom. We managed to see everything

A that was going on.

By Mr. Fortunato:

Q Can you tell us a little bit more about how you  
came to prepare this statement when the fellow from Newark  
Legal Services Project came to see you?

A How?

Q You did indicate that you had signed a statement  
or what we call an affidavit.

A How did I come about it?

Q What did the Newark Legal Services fellow do,  
walk in?

A He just wanted to know what happened, could I  
tell him how it went, mostly like I have been saying this  
evening.

Q Then did you sign the statement?

A No, not at that time because I think he said he  
had to take it back and write it better and do it over.

Q Then thereafter what did you do? Did he come back?

1 350 Spring...  
 2 A No, because I felt, "If you want me, you come and  
 3 see me." I have no intention of seeing him. The only  
 4 reason I am here, I don't think you would come.

5 Q Did he come back to see you?

6 A He came back with the paper already, the white  
 7 paper. It was all in order.

8 Q Did you read it? business yourself?

9 A Yes, sir, to make sure what I said was on that  
 10 paper, there was nothing added or left out. I made sure  
 11 it was right.

12 Q Is your husband a Negro?

13 A Yes. you operated the business elsewhere in

14 Newark? CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Anything else, gentlemen?

15 A Yes. Thank you very much, Mrs. King.

16 Q What address was that? (Witness excused)

17 A 150 Wavely Avenue -- and 124 Wavely Avenue.

18 Whereupon, How long have you resided in Newark?

19 A Oh, practically all my life. ELMO J. SESSOMS

20 called as a witness, first duly sworn, testified as follows:

21 A About CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Thank you for coming here,

22 Q How long have you been in business in Newark,  
 23 Mr. Sessoms.

24 totally? EXAMINATION

25 left A By Mr. Fortunato:

Q Can you tell us your home address?

for A 281 Belmont Avenue. My business address is