

Whereupon, **OLIVER DANILETT**

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

EXAMINATION

and said: By MR. Fortunato:

Q Give us your address, please.

A: 118 Renner Street,

Q How long have you been a resident at that address?

A Approximately seven or eight years. Don't count on it.

Q Your occupation?

A Program director for James Melton Johnson Community Center, New York City.

Q What is that?

A It is a multi-function agency. We have mental health clinic, day care, group work. It is a social agency, putting it in short terms, and I am the director.

Q What is your education?

A I have a college degree.

Q And where is that?

A Virginia State and Seton Hall.

Q Do you have any incident or incidents to relate to us that took place during the riot concerning law enforcement officials?

A Yes, I do.

1 Q Would you please indicate the date, the time and
2 hour and I will orient you to this extent: The Smith cab
3 driver incident was on July 12. The group gathering at
4 the Fourth Precinct was on July 13, which was a Thursday,
5 and Friday was July 14 and Saturday July 15.

6 A The incident happened on Thursday. I don't know
7 whether it is the 13th or 14th. I couldn't very well
8 remember.

9 Q This was the first day of the riots?

10 A The first day of the riots. I wouldn't swear to
11 that. To me it was the first day of the riots. It was on
12 a Thursday approximately seven-thirty in the evening. My
13 wife and I were coming from the store. We went up to the
14 store to get something, but we didn't get anything because
15 there was rioting and people were gathering. We were
16 coming back and we were standing right there in the streets
17 and the policemen, six, seven, eight State troopers and
18 local police, they came with guns and were pushing the
19 crowd back. We started moving back, but it seems we weren't
20 moving fast enough for them. They came in and they pushed
21 my wife. They pushed her down.

22 There was a couple of neighbors. We didn't like this
23 too much. I told them it wasn't necessary for this kind of
24 treatment. "We are moving, you know." Everybody there were
25 people who owned houses and had some sort of responsibility

1 to the law. It seemed this didn't work. They kept on
2 pushing and acting like we were dogs. We had no kind of
3 respect. They couldn't say, "Please move." They were
4 the authority. It had to be this way.

5 We moved back across the street. I wrote the police
6 commissioner a letter from New York because I felt this is
7 the kind of thing which causes people like me to become
8 very upset. When I first saw the riots I said how horrible
9 that this could happen in the city. Something is wrong,
10 but just because of the treatment and the kind of feeling
11 that the police had I was ready to go back to the street
12 myself, not to steal but to kind of find out why this has
13 to happen, why do the police have to act this way, what kind
14 of authority do they have to treat citizens this way.

15 Q When did you write this letter?

16 A I couldn't tell you. I wrote it a couple of days,
17 three or four days, sitting in my office.

18 Q After the riot?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Has that letter been responded to?

21 A From the Police Department, yes, it has.

22 Q Do you have that correspondence?

23 A Yes, I do. I imagine I do.

24 Q You don't have it with you?

25 A I have the letter I sent.

1 Q Do you have the response from the Police Department?

2 A No, but they did answer the letter.

3 Q What did they say?

4 A This is after I wrote to some group that I found
5 out that they could help a person like me with some legal
6 advice because I felt the police had to be aware of what
7 is really happening and the feeling of the people. I felt
8 just to sit back and let this incident slide I would be
9 doing a harm to the City of Newark and to myself. So I
10 wrote a letter to the Urban League and to some legal --

11 "there," with MR. GIBBONS: Legal Services Project?
12 of prejudice. THE WITNESS: Right. They got in contact
13 I think with me. At first I was going to start a law
14 a little suit. I said no, that is not the best way to
15 I know they have a job to do, and I know it is a way
16 handle it. The best way is to handle it through
17 the Police Department itself.

18 and their own. I talked to Sergeant Pokett, and I went
19 back three or four times and he visited me and
20 and maybe be social workers. What my name is, I don't know.
21 we talked about the case and Badge No. 1551.
22 I feel when we talked to a white man or a policeman, the
23 By Mr. Fortunato:

24 Q How did you get that badge number?

25 A I got the badge number by glancing up at the
officer.

Q This was when?

A When they were involved with my wife, who is going

1 to testify next. He talked. Sergeant Rokett, who is a
2 very intelligent man, who I believe really does his job --
3 I couldn't see -- he says, "You people are okay. But what
4 about the other people?" He said, "You are different." I
5 told him, "I am not different. I have the same feelings;
6 I relate to the same kind of problems that all Negroes or
7 black people do. I do have the same kind of feelings."

8 He said, "You are different. You are not like those
9 people over there."

10 If a law officer says, "those kind of people over
11 there," with him investigating, he has to have some kind
12 of prejudice. I believe the whole problem is education.
13 I think they are using 1900 techniques. There has to be
14 a little bit of feeling for people, not social workers.
15 I know they have a job to do, and I know it is a very
16 dangerous job, but we have to be concerned with people
17 and their emotions and attitudes.

18 There are times when they have to use strict force
19 and maybe be social workers. What my people like myself
20 feel when we talked to a white man or a policeman, the
21 authoritative figure, they are not aware of it. They go
22 in one way. I think this is what the cause of a lot of
23 problems here in Newark is.

24 I couldn't let this slide, so I did write the letter
25 and I did get satisfactory treatment from the Police

1 Department, satisfaction from the point of view that I
2 feel this officer is going to be punished because not
3 only of my case but of other cases because of what I had
4 been told by Sergeant Pokett. I wanted to let them know
5 some way they had to talk to the police and the police had
6 to be aware of the feeling of the people, just human beings,
7 what they stand for, whether they are dirty black, or,
8 that everybody is due equal treatment. If you don't have
9 that, and I think this is the beginning step with the
10 police -- housing, education, welfare being the next steps.

11 Until we get some sort of relationships with the
12 police, there will be worse riots because you have people
13 like us very angry now. I never became aware of the racial
14 problem before, but I am very angry to the point I don't
15 see the change in police attitude. I am going to fight,
16 not loot or steal, but become more aggressive in the whole
17 civil rights issue and to the point where any kind of stand
18 is necessary I will be willing to go forth, except stealing
19 and hurting. There are other avenues to be taken by the
20 Negroes if something is not done by the Police Department.
21 I feel very strongly about it.

22 Q: What sort of activity was going on at the time of
23 the kind of officer that can give the name of walking to
24 the incident?

25 A: Stealing, looting, the noise. There was some
gunfire. It was a very exciting situation, I grant you

1 that.

2 Q How did the people who were on the street happen
3 to be out there other than the looters?

4 A People draw people, you know. This is what I
5 believe. I think the average was just bystanders, not
6 angry, because I know quite a few of the neighbors were
7 there people I know very well. They are very hard-working
8 people, and it is the first time they have owned their
9 houses and they take pride in them. We were saying what
10 a shame this is. They weren't people from our block, but
11 a couple of blocks over. As soon as the police moved in
12 and started their action their whole attitude changed,
13 the feeling that they are no longer people; they are
14 animals being herded, being treated, snarls. I wouldn't
15 want to repeat the remarks. I am under oath. I don't
16 know what they were exactly or who said them. As a matter
17 of fact, there was an officer who said, "Don't push. You
18 don't have to treat the people like this," and I am trying
19 to think of his name. Because when he got ready to push
20 my wife he said, "This is not necessary. Let's move them
21 back." Very kind.

22 This is the kind of officer we need more of. This is
23 the kind of officer that can give the kind of training to
24 the Police Department that would help this ill feeling.

25 Q Was that latter officer white or colored?

1 A It was a white officer.

2 Q I think you have said this. What kind of area is
3 the street? Are there stores, houses?

4 A Beacon Street is a business area, stores,
5 laundromats, cleaners, hardware stores, A&P, this kind of
6 thing.

7 Q What number of Bergen Street was this? Can you
8 tell us?

9 A No. It is between Bergen and Hesser Avenue.

10 Q Did you personally see the badge number of the
11 policeman?

12 A Yes, I did. I couldn't swear to it. I was down
13 to the Police Department. I looked at the pictures. They
14 had numbers, and I couldn't swear this was actually the guy.
15 Sergeant Bokett feels he knows the fellow, and disciplinary
16 action will be taken.

17 Q Who told you the number?

18 A I looked at it. It was on his hat, 1551. I looked
19 here (indicating the chest area) and it wasn't here, and
20 all over. I happened to glance up and it was 1551.

21 MR. DRISCOLL: On his hat or helmet?

22 THE WITNESS: I believe it was the helmet.
23 No, I think it was the hat. I am not sure. I
24 wouldn't swear. I did look up and I saw that
25 badge. My wife was being pushed, and I couldn't

1 swear it was a hat or helmet, but I do know the
2 number. It stuck in my mind.

3 MR. DRISCOLL: Did I understand correctly
4 that there were State police as well as city
5 policemen?

6 THE WITNESS: Yes.

7 MR. DRISCOLL: Were there any National
8 Guardsmen?

9 THE WITNESS: Can I tell you something about
10 the National Guard incident? I think you have
11 got to live in this to understand it a bit, and I
12 know you have heard a lot of testimony.

13 My wife and I were taking Father White, my
14 cousin, down to the train station. We were pulling
15 out by the National Guard, and he wouldn't let us
16 out. There were white people coming on by. No
17 kind of feeling. We got there, had to be stopped,
18 searched, harassed. It is this kind of thing that
19 really upsets a person. There was no kind of
20 thought or "We are under a stress situation," a
21 very exciting situation; let's move with caution,
22 let's move with care and let's give everybody a
23 thorough break, because this is what they were
24 saying, that we are not going to give everybody
25 fair treatment because I was colored and the

1 average other person was white. He didn't know us,
2 it was true. He has to think about all these
3 things, but he makes a decision.

4 MR. DRISCOLL: This latter harassment, was
5 that by the National Guard?

6 THE WITNESS: Yes.

7 MR. DRISCOLL: With respect to the incident
8 you have described when you said your wife was
9 pushed, was she pushed down to the ground?

10 THE WITNESS: Yes, by the gun. The guns were
11 like here. The officers were holding the guns,
12 and they pushed. She is a school teacher, and she
13 is not an angry person. I am not an angry person.

14 MR. DRISCOLL: That is our great problem, to
15 see what we can do to eliminate some of this anger
16 that exists unnecessarily.

17 THE WITNESS: I don't think it is
18 unnecessarily. I think a person like myself --
19 there is a certain amount of anger -- not anger
20 at the white man; I think it is anger in what the
21 Police Department's attitudes are, the 1900
22 attitude which hasn't been changed. You don't
23 speak of the Governor of New Jersey or of white
24 people but Governor of people. That is the
25 attitude we would like to see in the Police

1 Department.

2 MR. DRISCOLL: I don't think any of us are
3 called defending improper conduct. When I said anger,
4 I meant anger that we hope we can do something to
5 correct.

6 Q Did you distinguish between the action of
7 the State police and the local police?

8 Q THE WITNESS: I couldn't say. I really
9 couldn't. I wouldn't want to say. I couldn't
10 say.

11 MR. DRISCOLL: I don't have anything else.

12 Q CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Anything else?

13 A By Mr. Fortunato: Yes, please.

14 Q Just one question. Do you know what the Black
15 Panther Patrol is?

16 A No, I do not.

17 Q CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Thank you very much, Mr.
18 Bartlett.

19 (Witness excused)
20 incident that occurred during the ...
happened to you in particular.

21 A Well, it was a Thursday evening about seven
22 o'clock, and my husband and I were going to the store,
23 we live just over the corner of ...
24 street is on ... Street, which is a very short block.
25 we were going to the store. As we went out we saw an

thereupon, following to Bergen Street, and we made a turn
corner of the fact that **CAROL BARTLETT**
called as a witness, first duly sworn, testified as follows:

EXAMINATION

By Mr. Fortunato:

Q Your address, I take it, is 118 Renner Avenue?

A Yes.

Q And how long have you lived there?

A Seven years.

Q Your occupation?

A Teacher and singer.

Q Where are you a teacher?

A Elmwood School in East Orange.

Q Are you originally from East Orange?

A Texas.

Q As you know, your husband just testified before
you, and I would appreciate it if you would indicate to
us and relate it as best you can as to day and time any
incident that occurred during the riot, the one that
happened to you in particular.

A Well, it was a Thursday evening about seven
o'clock, and my husband and I were going to the store.
We live just near the corner of Huxterton and Renner. The
store is on Bergen Street, which is a very short block.
We were going to the store. As we went out we saw so