

10²⁰ AM - 3/12/65 - A.D.A. Stern's office -
Isaac Williams
126 Riverside Dr. - 5W

Law Clerk - Mark Spiras -
80 North Franklin St.
Hempstead, N.Y.

arrived at Ballroom as police were
taking prisoner away in car -
entered ballroom, saw great deal of
confusion, guards around stage,
Malcolm lying there, police came
with stretchers took Malcolm away.

Witness states he will give infor-
mation if he is put before a Grand
jury - uncooperative - hostile -
refuses to identify any person he
saw at ballroom except James
Shubaz.

Served Subpoena at 10⁴⁰ AM - by A.D.A.
Stern - returnable - 2^{PM} - 3/12/65

3/12/65

Isidore Weichman
120 Riverside Dr. Apt 5-W
No Telephone

Law Clerk - Mark A Spier
80 N. Franklin St
Hempstead C.I.

PEOPLE VS. JOHN DOE, et al.

March 12, 1965

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Before:

A QUORUM OF THE THIRD MARCH 1965

GRAND JURY

Presented by:

HERBERT J. STERN, Esq.,

Assistant District Attorney

- o o o -

DAVID M. SOLOMONS

HERMAN D. TARDY,

Grand Jury Reporters

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I S I A H W I L L I A M S, called as a
witness, having been first duly sworn,

testified as follows:

BY MR. STERN:

Q What is your name, sir?

A My name is Isiah Williams.

Q Where do you live Mr. Williams?

A 120 Riverside Driver.

Q What do you do for a living?

A I work as a law clerk.

Q Are you a graduate of law school?

A Yes.

Q Which law school did you graduate from?

A Florida A.M. University.

Q And are you an admitted attorney?

A No.

Q In other words you are waiting for the chance to be admitted to the Bar of New York State, correct?

A Yes.

Q Mr. Williams, are you a member or were you a member of Malcolm X's O.O.A.U?

A Yes.

Q And for how long have you --

A A -- I am a member -- there is a question, where an -- an -- I am a member of the Organization on Afro-American Unity.

Q How long have you been a member of that?

A Four months.

Q Are you a member in any special capacity?

A No, I am not.

Q You have no special designation within

the organization?

A No.

Q Mr. Williams --

A Yes.

Q -- would you kindly refrain from making notes at this time? Of course what you do when you are not in the grand jury is something else, you are just here to testify and if you wouldn't mind, it would be much easier for the grand jury in terms of time, if you were merely testifying and not pausing to write down questions and answers in between. There is only limited time available to the grand jury, and it is unfortunate but it does not permit this sort of double stenographic records. All right?

Now, Mr. Williams, do you perform any legal services for the O.O.A.U?

A No, I do not.

Q Have you ever been designated to act

in any special capacity for the O.O.A.U?

A No, I haven't.

Q Now, I direct your attention to Sunday, February 21, 1965, the day Malcolm X was shot, and I

ask you did there come a time when you went to the Audubon Ballroom on -- in this County on that day?

A Yes.

Q About what time was it that you arrived at the ballroom?

A About three o'clock. I am not sure of the time.

Q About three o'clock?

A Yes.

Q And what if anything happened when you arrived at the ballroom?

A When I arrived at the ballroom?

Q Yes.

A When I arrived at the ballroom, Malcolm was on the stage.

Q He was on the stage?

A Yes. I mean laying on the stage.

Q Did you hear any gun fire as you approached the ballroom?

A Yes.

Q What did you see as you approached the ballroom?

A I saw a number of persons -- well, when I say a number, a large group of people running out a door, and I saw a group of fellows running to a police car.

And when I got almost to the car I saw some of the fellows trying to sit someone in the car. And some other fellows was on the other side pushing on the car.

Q When you say fellows, what do you mean by fellows?

A Males.

Q Did you know any of these males?

A No.

Q Did you recognize a single male in front of the police car?

A No.

Q And did there come a time when you went inside the ~~ballroom~~ ballroom?

A Yes.

Q And there at you saw Malcolm X lying on

the stage?

A No, when I first walked into the ballroom, everything was very confused -- well, ask the question again please.

Q When you walked into the ballroom did you see Malcolm X laying on the stage?

A Not as I walked into the ballroom, no.

Q Did there come a time inside when you saw his body on the stage?

A Yes.

Q Was he then surrounded by a group of people there?

A Yes.

Q And you saw various people inside the ballroom; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And did anybody approach you as you came in the ballroom?

A Yes.

Q Who approached you?

A A young lady they call Sister Beatrice.

Q Sister Beatrice?

A Yes.

Q Was there -- what is wher last name?

A I don't know.

Q How long have you known Sister Beatrice?

A I don't really know her.

Q She came up to you, is that right?

A Yes.

Q Was she crying?

A Yes.

Q Did she single you out to come up to?

A Well, actually I really singled her out. I asked her what was going on, because I had asked everybody this and nobody had told me anything as yet.

Q What are the names of the people that you asked?

A These were people around the car, as -- these were people that was around the car on the outside.

Q You didn't know any names?

A No.

Q Would you tell the grand jury the names of the people that you saw inside the ballroom when you entered?

A Well, actually the only person that I know by name that I saw inside the ballroom, as I can recall at this particular time, was James Shabazz.

Q Otherwise known as James Wardon, or

James 67X?

A Well, I have to say I guess so on this, this I don't know.

Q You have been a member for four months, is that right?

A Yes.

Q Haven't you heard him referred to as James 67X Warden?

A No.

Q You never have?

A No.

Q And he's the only person you recognized in the ballroom?

A This there is the only person I know, that I know by name.

Q The only person whose name you know?

A The name that I know.

Q Did you see Rubin Francis there for

instance?

A No.

Q Do you know him to see?

A Yes.

Q Now, Mr. Williams, did there come

a time this week when you were in my office?

A Yes.

Q Do you remember what day that was?

A Monday or Tuesday, one of the days.

Q And at that time you came with another

man, is that right?

A Right.

Q Do you remember the name of that man?

A Yes.

Q What is his name?

A John Gray. (Phonetic)

Q Is that -- does he have a number?

A I don't know.

Q You don't know if he has?

A I -- see, I don't know these numbers, because --
well, go ahead and ask the question. I don't know.

Q Now, at that time when you were in my

office, did you tell me that you were there as an attorney?

A No.

Q You did not make that representation?

A No.

Q What did you tell me when you were there?

A I told you -- first I told you, I asked you had you received a call from my boss, and I told you that he was going to New Jersey, and he sent me as his law clerk.

Q You said as his law clerk?

A Yes.

Q I see. Now, at any time during this conference, earlier this week, did you tell me that you yourself had been in the ballroom?

A Earlier this week? When you say earlier this week, what do you mean?

Q I mean the time you appeared with Mr.

Gray in my office.

A No, no.

Q Did you at any time tell me that you had been in the ballroom yourself?

A No.

(Continued on next page.)

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Q Now, this week, Tuesday night of this week, did there come a time that you attended a meeting at the Hotel Theresa here in New York County?

A Yes.

Q What sort of meeting was that?

A It was a meeting of the organization of American-African Unity.

Q How many people approximately were at that meeting?

A 30, 40, 50 approximately.

Q Where was it held?

A You just said, the Hotel Theresa.

Q What room in the Hotel Theresa?

A 128.

Q Is that a very large room would you say?

A No, it is a room --

Q Is it as big as this grand jury room?

A I would say yes. I am not sure. It is hard to say.

Q And how many people did you estimate were present?

A Anywhere from 30 to 50.

Q What are the names of the people that you

saw there?

A The only person I knew by name was Mrs. Ellie.
I don't know her last name.

Q Ellie Collins would that be?

A I think so. Mrs. Malcolm X's sister.

Q And anybody else that you recognize by
any sort of name at all?

A James the Bass, a fellow by the name of --

I am not sure whether his name is Charles or Chuck Woods.

Q Now, was this an open meeting to all the
membership or was it an executive meeting.

A I would take it for granted it was an open
meeting of all the membership because I came by by
accident.

Q By accident?

A Yes.

Q Did there come a time during this meeting
that Malcolm X's sister Ellie Collins designated you
to head the legal department or to handle the legal
affairs of the movement?

A No.

Q There never came such a time?

A There never came such a time.

Q Did there ever come a time when she signalled you out at all for any purpose?

A Yes.

Q For what purpose was that?

A She said that she hoped one day we -- talking in terms of the organization-- one day that the organization would have a legal firm, and she didn't signal anyone out, but she said there was a man in the back that she hoped would be a member of the firm -- and I was one of those persons in the back.

Q That is hardly signalling you out, is it.

A No.

Q She didn't point to you?

A No.

Q She didn't introduce you?

A No.

Q You were not introduced by name?

A No.

Q She said that there was somebody in back who might one day handle legal business, is that right?

A Right.

Q Approximately how many people were there in the Audubon Ballroom when you walked in that Sunday?

A Well, that is a problem.

Q A rough guess.

A I would really be a rough guess.

Q Was it more than 100, for instance?

A I really don't know.

Q From all those people that were there the only two names that you know now are the two that you have given, is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Are you positive?

A Yes. Let's get this straight. There might be many people there that I know.

Q But you didn't see them.

A I didn't see them -- or if I saw them, I don't know their names.

Q Well, for instance, do you know Mrs. Malcolm X or Malcolm X's wife? Do you know what she looks like?

A From the paper, yes.

Q You never saw her in person?

A In fact, I saw her that day outside the Audubon Ballroom for the first time.

Q That day outside the Audubon Ballroom?

A Yes.

Q You had been to previous meetings in the Audubon Ballroom?

A Yes.

Q Had you ever seen her there?

A No.

Q You never have?

A No.

Q Do you know a brother Malcolm 35 X?

A I don't know any X's.

Q Do you know any of the X's?

A No.

Q Did you know Malcolm X, didn't you?

A Yes.

Q Mr. Williams, I show you this photograph and I point to this figure in it and I ask you whether or not that is you.

A Yes, it is.

Q And that is you in the Audubon Ballroom,

is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And this stretcher bearing a body passed you?

A No, I am helping with the stretcher.

Q You are helping to carry the stretcher, is that right?

A Yes.

Q And that represents you in the Audubon Ballroom on the day in question, helping to carry a stretcher on which the body of Malcolm X is resting?

A Yes.

Q MR. STERN: I ask this photograph be received as Grand Jury Exhibit 1 of this date.

(Marked Grand Jury Exhibit No. L.)

Q Mr. Williams, I would like to show you this photograph and I ask you to look at the people portrayed in this photograph and to tell me the names or any part of the names of any of the persons that you know in that photograph.

A I believe I saw Betty for the first time to my knowing on the outside and this appears to be Betty and this looks like Reuben Francis here, and this appears

this looks like Betty here.

Q Do you know a Sister Sharon 6X?

A No.

Q You don't know her?

A Not by name.

Q I point to this photograph. Had you ever seen her before?

A Yes.

Q But you have no idea of her name?

A No. This is a better picture of Reuben.

Q How about the figure clad in white in this photograph, do you know who he is?

A I have seen this picture in the newspapers and I have seen him around.

Q What is his name?

A I don't know.

Q You have no idea?

A No.

Q Do you know what he is called?

A No, but I know from an article in the paper, he took a picture with Malcolm X, and he is here to teach something or other, and this picture is a picture of me.

This picture seems to be Betty again, and it seems to be Betty again here, and Betty here.

Q Sp the only people that you know by name or any kind of name at all in any of these photographs is Betty X, Reuben Francis or Reuben X, and yourself; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Mr. Williams, do you remember this morning in my office we had a conversation with reference to the events at the Audubon Ballroom that day?

A Yes.

Q And do you recall my asking you for the name of the woman who approached crying?

A Yes.

Q Did you give me the name at the time I asked you?

A No.

Q Did you in fact tell me that you would not give me that name unless I brought you before the Grand Jury under oath?

A Right.

MR. STERN: I have no further questions. Any questions from the Grand Jury? Thank you.

MEMORANDUM

March 19, 1965

TO: MR. HERMAN
FROM: MR. STERN
RE: ISIAH WILLIAMS

On March 8, 1965, one John Gray came to the District Attorney's Office pursuant to a Grand Jury subpoena issued in connection with the investigation into the fatal shooting of Malcolm X which occurred at the Audabon Ballroom on February 21, 1965.

Mr. Gray appeared at my office with one Isiah William, 120 Riverside Drive, Apt. 5W, represented himself to me as Gray's attorney. Present during this interview were myself, Isiah Williams, John Gary, Detective Cavallaro and Patrolman Cusmano of the 34th Squad.

Mr. Gray denied being present at the Audabon Ballroom on February 21, 1965.

At a later time, I learned from independent sources that Isiah William was himself a member of Malcolm X's Organization of American Afro-Unity, had himself been present in the Audabon Ballroom on February 21, 1965, was not yet a licensed attorney but merely a law school graduate employed as a law clerk by a Mark A. Spires, 80 North Franklin Street, Hempstead, Long Island.

On March 12, 1965, I interviewed Mr. Williams in my office. At that time, he stated that he was a graduate of Florida A & M Law School, waiting to take his New York State bar exam. He denied representing himself to me as an attorney at our previous conference. He did admit that he had not informed me that he himself had been in the Audabon Ballroom on February 21, 1965, but he stated that he had neglected to do so because he had assumed that I already knew about his presence in the ballroom. He stated that he had been a member of the O.A.A.U. for about four months. When I asked him for the names of the people who he had seen in the Audabon Ballroom on the day that Malcolm X was slain, he refused to give me that information and told me that if I wished to make him disclose any names, I would have to put him before the Grand Jury, at which time, he would reveal the information under testimony compulsion.

It, therefore, became necessary to put him before the Grand Jury and that afternoon, he testified before the Third March 1965 Grand Jury.

While testifying, he insisted on making verbatim notes of his testimony and the Grand Jury proceedings. It became necessary for the Grand Jury to intervene and to instruct him to discontinue these activities.

In my opinion, Mr. Williams' conduct was openly hostile to law enforcement authority and obstructed this homicide investigation. His conduct before the Grand Jury bordered on contempt.

HES:jr