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January 10, 1958

Mrs. Ruby Hurley
859½ Hunter Street, N.W., Room 107
Atlanta 14, Georgia

RE: Report on the Slaying of George Love of Ruleville, Mississippi

Dear Mrs. Hurley:

George Love, a thirty-eight year old Negro itinerant worker, was shot and killed near the Ruleville Corporation, Wednesday morning, by a group of white men sprinkled with highway patrolmen, county officers and a host of civilians.

George Love was a suspect in the double murder, January 5, of an aged Negro couple in the Ruleville community. The couple had been beaten to death and their home burned down on them. Love was married into the family of the victims - to a niece - and was familiar with the prosperity of the aged couple. He had been seen Tuesday morning, January 7, spending large sums of money that he was known previously not to have had. According to his wife's mother, her daughter had become overly suspicious of her husband George, in that he would not divulge the source of the large amounts of money (old bills) that he was spending, and when she would question him about the money and the source he would retort "let me worry about that". While in Dattle's Department Store purchasing goods for his wife and flashing these old bills, the clerk became suspicious, realizing the recent murder-robbery of the aged couple, and called the police. When the marshall came to the scene and began to question him about the bills, Love began walking away, at which time the marshall demanded that he halt and told him that he was going to search him. As he began searching Love, reports are that he whipped out his pistol and shot the officer three times. He ran out of the store, down an alley, with a black overcoat on. Reports are that he discarded the overcoat and cap some two hundred feet from the scene and returned to the streets undetected by his pursurers. By that time the word had spread around and the little town became very explosive.

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Reports are that there were hoards of white men and teenage boys, with all types of guns, searching every possible nook and corner for the assailant. (This might be coincidental but reliable reports say that men known to belong to the Citizens Council were dressed in red caps and red coats and constituted a large percentage of the posse.) "Volunteers", white, from surrounding counties - Bolivar, Humphreys, Leflore and Tallahatchie were all pressed into the hunt.

Negro citizens report of a reign of terror Tuesday night, when their doorbells were constantly rang and men entered their homes, often times without an invitation, panting like madmen and brandishing their guns.

Because of the intensity of the search and the aroused feeling, the Field Secretary did not stay in town Wednesday night, however, Thursday morning, dressed in Army fatigues and boots, I was able to mill among a number of the Negro citizens without being too noticeably observed.

Love was slain on the Livingston Plantation on the outskirts of Ruleville. According to reports, from people in the area, the police called to Love to surrender for approximately a half hour and then, after Love's allegedly trying to shoot it out, was slain by the posse. The body of Love, as of Thursday, January 9, was at the Smith-Dillon Funeral Home in Indianola (birthplace and headquarters of the Citizens Council). My personal observation of the body revealed that he had been shot through the buttocks and the bullets came out through the groin, apparently on each side. He had been shot through the back of the calf of his left leg by a highly explosive contact bullet which tore a hole of considerable size when it came out. It also shattered the bone. His right leg had also been pierced with a bullet. Both legs were broken. There was a bullet hole in the back right side of his head which, to me, indicates that he had been shot from behind.

Mrs. Love was being held in jail for questioning, obviously in connection with the crime he is suspected of having committed. Incidentally, the only Negroes that were in the posse was one who was in the store at the time of the incident and who could identify Love and some Negro trustees from Parchman Penitentiary, apparently used to flush him out in the open to be gunned down.

State authorities are desperately trying to link Love, who was an exconvict, with the triple murder-robbery of a white storekeeper, his wife, and mother, in September 1957.

Respectfully submitted,

Medgar W. Evers
Field Secretary

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cc: Wilkins, Current and Mitchell