

Case Number:

89-WF-506

Serial(s):

78-79

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Date of transcription 6/6/77

BARBARA PEIRCE, wife of NEAL PEIRCE, 610 G Street, S.W., Washington, D. C. (WDC), telephone 554-8191, was interviewed at her residence in the presence of JERRY HAGSTROM. At the time of this interview, PEIRCE advised that her husband was presently out of town and not available. PEIRCE was advised of the identity of the interviewing Agent and the nature of the inquiry.

Thereafter, PEIRCE voluntarily provided the following information:

PEIRCE advised that on May 9, 1977, at approximately 7:10 a.m., Mr. PEIRCE received a telephone call from an individual identifying himself as BASIL CORNFIELD, 215 New Orleans Drive, New Orleans, Louisiana. She explained that CORNFIELD advised her husband that he had been involved in the assassinations of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING and JOHN F. KENNEDY and would like to make arrangements with Mr. PEIRCE to surrender himself. She stated that Mr. PEIRCE replied, "I suggest you call the local police, and don't call back." She stated that Mr. PEIRCE then hung up.

On the same date, May 9, 1977, at 11:20 p.m., PEIRCE advised that another telephone call was received by her husband which appeared to be the same individual, but did not identify himself. She advised that the individual stated, "You are going to be killed." She advised that Mr. PEIRCE then hung up after that statement. PEIRCE stated that approximately three minutes later, at 11:23 p.m., the telephone rang again and was answered by herself, and the same individual stated, "Your husband's life is in danger." Mrs. PEIRCE stated she then hung up.

On May 10, 1977, at 1:20 a.m., another call was received by Mr. PEIRCE from what appeared to be the same individual and stated, "You folks still up?" Mrs. PEIRCE advised that her husband then hung up. She further stated that at 1:23 a.m., the telephone rang again, and she answered and asked, "Who is it?" PEIRCE stated there was no answer, and she then hung up. She then advised that her

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husband took the telephone off the hook for the rest of the night.

On May 11, 1977, at 4:16 p.m., Mrs. PEIRCE stated that she received another call from what appeared to be the same individual; however, he gave a different name and address, but PEIRCE advised that she is unable to remember what they are. She did say, however, that she believed the individual gave a WDC address. At the time of this telephone call, PEIRCE advised that the individual stated he had something to do with the assassination of JOHN F. KENNEDY and would be over to their house that night to talk about it. Mrs. PEIRCE stated she then hung up.

Mrs. PEIRCE advised that at approximately 6:15 p.m., on May 11, 1977, her husband, NEAL, had advised JERRY HAGSTROM to notify the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and advise them of the threat. She further advised that KENNETH CURRY and GRADY COVINGTON, First District, Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), telephone 626-2821, were notified and came by her house that same night. She advised that the MPD detectives suggested that she and her children stay at a friend's house for that evening. PEIRCE advised that that night she and her children did stay at a neighbor's house.

Mrs. PEIRCE explained that each call appeared to be long distance, except for the telephone call on May 11, 1977, at 4:16 p.m. She explained that there seemed to be a lot of static on the line, which leads her to believe that the calls were long distance. She explained that the telephone call on May 11, however, did not have the same static that all the other telephone calls had. She also advised that the caller appeared to be a white male, approximately 50-55 years of age and had a rasping or hoarse type sounding voice. PEIRCE then advised that she could not remember anything else about the individual's voice.

Mrs. PEIRCE explained that on Tuesday, May 10, 1977, after the first telephone call was received, she notified the FBI, who advised her that she should contact the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Telephone Company. PEIRCE advised that she then contacted Mrs. APPEL, Special Office for Annoying Phone Calls, C&O Telephone Company, and advised them of the harrassing telephone call. She advised that the telephone company advised her that they would be unable to trace the call.

Mrs. PEIRCE explained that her husband is a syndicated columnist and that there was a recent article in TIME Magazine concerning her husband, which outlining his career, as well as his family members. She further explained, however, that her husband has not been involved nor has anything to do with the investigation of MARTIN LUTHER KING or JOHN F. KENNEDY.

During this interview, Mrs. PEIRCE was contacted by Mrs. APPEL, C&P Telephone Company, and requested that she speak with interviewing Agent. Mrs. APPEL advised interviewing Agent that at the present time, the telephone company is attempting to trace the long distance records on the incoming telephone calls to the PEIRCE telephone number. She further advised that as to date, the telephone company has been unsuccessful in their effort. She explained that if additional information was provided to the telephone company, the FBI should contact Mr. HILL, Security Specialist, C&P Telephone Company, 7251 13th Street, N.W., WDC, telephone 392-2886. Mrs. APPEL was then advised by interviewing Agent that if additional information was obtained through the telephone company, she should contact interviewing Agent immediately. At that time, Mrs. APPEL was given interviewing Agent's name and telephone number.

In conclusion, Mrs. PEIRCE advised that she and her husband would cooperate with the FBI and local police in any way they saw fit. She further advised that she would have no objection if the FBI desired to monitor any of her incoming telephone calls.

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AZIE MORTON, designated Treasurer of the United States Treasury, 15th and Pennsylvania Avenues, N.W., Washington, D. C. (WDC), Room 3407, telephone 566-2843, home address 4903 Bråstow Drive, Annandale, Virginia, home telephone (703) 941-7421, was interviewed at her place of employment. MORTON was advised of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the inquiry. Thereafter, MORTON voluntarily provided the following information:

MORTON advised that on June 8, 1977, at approximately 6:04 a.m., she received a telephone call at her residence from an unidentified individual who stated, "Is this AZIE MORTON?" "Are you going to be the next Treasurer of the United States?" MORTON replied that depends on the Congress. MORTON stated the individual then said to get a pencil and paper and advised her that he had information pertaining to the assassination of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, Jr. MORTON replied, "You should call the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or the House Assassination Committee." The individual then advised her that if she did not take the information down, she would be "exterminated." The individual then hung up.

MORTON explained that at approximately 6:30 a.m. on the same morning, a second call was received at her residence, which was answered by her husband, Mr. JAMES H. MORTON. She explained that her husband stated, "This is Mr. MORTON," and the caller stated, "I want to talk to Mrs. MORTON, but she won't talk with me." Mr. MORTON then asked who's calling, and he replied (FNU) KNOX. He then stated he had information pertaining to the assassination of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, Jr. Mr. MORTON then replied that he should contact the FBI or the House Assassination Committee. The caller then stated, "If you don't cooperate and take this information, you and your wife will be killed by 2:00 p.m. tomorrow." The caller then hung up.

MORTON stated that after she arrived at work that morning, she notified the security officer at the Treasury building, who in turn notified the United States Secret Service (USSS). MORTON stated that a representative from the USSS came by her office that same morning and interviewed her regarding the telephone calls.

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MORTON was unable to determine if the caller was a black or white individual but stated it was a male caller who had a mature and clear voice, about 40 years of age. She also explained that the first call appeared to be long distance, because there was a lot of static on the line. The second call she could not tell. MORTON also advised that her home telephone number is a public listing, listed in the Northern Virginia Directory.

MORTON advised that her husband, JAMES H. MORTON, is employed on Capitol Hill and could be contacted at 225-8214.