**A Letter from the Four Survivors of the 1979 Greensboro Massacre Currently Residing in Greensboro to the City Council of Greensboro**

October 17, 2017

**Group 1. Bullet point 1.**

**“Police and City Foreknowledge of Violence along with Failure to Warn Potential Victims: Having foreknowledge about a planned confrontation by violence-prone groups from many sources, including from a Klansman who was a paid police informant, but never sharing the known threat in the weeks leading up to the parade with those who stood to be harmed. “** (p.1)

…Edward Dawson, longtime Klansman and previously an FBI informant, who had served jail time on charges stemming from a 1967 shooting spree in a black community in Alamance County, was the GPD’s Confidential Informant 1068, recruited in early to mid-October 1979. ***His handler was Police Detective Jerry Cooper***. … (p.4)

By obtaining a copy of the permit, as per Detective Cooper’s instruction, Dawson, along with other Klan members, was able to reconnoiter the route, in the early morning hours of November 3rd, in order to choose the place for their planned confrontation…p.4)

Throughout late October, until minutes before bullets rained down on people gathering to participate in the march, Dawson was supplying the Greensboro police with information, ***for which he was paid***, about the developing plans of the KKK and other violent, right-wing organizations for a confrontation at the anti-Klan rally... (p.4)

On October 31, 1979, Detective Cooper wrote a confidential report… on his contact with Dawson. .. Cooper writes that he was contacted by Dawson who:

had been in contact with the Grand Dragon of the K.K.K., Virgil Griffin, from Mount Holly, North Carolina, who stated Leroy Gibson, who is head of the Rights of the White People in Wilmington, had informed him that members of his organization would be in Greensboro on 11/3/1979 and also that Harold Covington, head of the Nazi Party in Raleigh, North Carolina, had informed him that members of his organization would be in Greensboro on 11/3/1979 reference the Anti-Klan rally being held by the Workers Viewpoint Organization…The informant stated that Virgil Griffin, the Grand Dragon, was to arrive in the Greensboro area at approximately 2 a.m., 11/3/1979, to survey the parade route in an effort to determine where a confrontation might take place between the W.V.O. and the other organizations…He stated as soon as he can find out the numbers of people involved and the location for a confrontation, he will contact this writer and advise him of those locations and numbers …(p.5)

…

…There are numerous …pieces of evidence to uphold the conclusion that the police had foreknowledge not only that there *might* be violence on November 3rd but that *there would most likely* be violence… (p.6)

***Not once did the police warn the demonstrators of the impending danger they faced***. The police knew, and they did not tell us so that we might do something different... rather than walk into a deadly ambush. (p.6)

…

Klansman and police informant Edward Dawson was far from the only source of information about the potential for violence at the anti-Klan rally. A prior clash on July 8, 1979, in China Grove, NC, between WVO members and the KKK, in which the WVO burned a confederate flag, is mentioned on the first page of the police administrative report as “background information.” (p.6)

At China Grove, Klan and Nazi members armed with rifles were confronted by anti-Klan demonstrators with sticks and clubs…*No violence occurred that day-- one or two police officers were stationed at the site*. (p.6)

The Greensboro police knew … the details of the China Grove confrontation and how potentially explosive it was... Even without Klan informant Dawson telling them about the active preparations being made to confront anti-Klan demonstrators …, did the police not have enough foreknowledge from the China Grove clash to know that a huge potential for violence existed if these two adversarial groups came together again? (p.7)

.. *Other* law enforcement agencies and other individuals shared information with the GPD that pointed most definitively to the potential for violence that day. ..(p.7)

[Lewis] Pitts, [lead attorney in the 1985 civil suit] cites specific factual evidence about three law enforcement agencies with foreknowledge about plans to violently attack the anti-Klan rally of November 3, 1979--the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Greensboro Police Department (GPD). Much of this information was shared inter-agency … All three agencies knew… that specific Klansmen and Nazis planned to go armed with guns and other weapons to the anti-Klan rally in Greensboro for the purpose of assaulting anti-Klan demonstrators. “*Yet, all three agencies failed to be present that day,*” writes Pitts, “*or provide any warning or protection for the demonstrators. In fact, the Greensboro Police Department took action to ensure the demonstrators would be unarmed and thus unprotected*.” (p.7)

At 10:00 a.m. on the morning of November 3rd the GPD held a briefing for the Tactical Units assigned to cover the anti-Klan parade. Present were most of the 26 members assigned to the activity (see Police Administrative Report of Nov. 19, 1979, pp. 10-11 for names) along with Detective Cooper, Police Attorney Maurice Cawn, Lieutenant Spoon and Lieutenant Daughtry. Detective Cooper relayed his “reliable and up-to-date” intelligence (Police Administrative Report of Nov. 19, 1979, p. 8) that he received earlier that morning, around 7:30, by phone from informant Dawson. The Tactical Units were advised that Klan members were already gathered at a residence on Randleman Road known to the police, that they planned to ride the parade route and heckle the marchers, throw eggs, and perhaps fist-fight with demonstrators, and that some Klan members had handguns. It was clear at this point that the Klan/Nazi group came to Greensboro planning to break the law. (p.7)

…

Virtually everything known at the November 3rd police briefing was known at a prior police meeting on November 1st. *The November 3rd briefing verified the fact that Klan and Nazi members had actually assembled and were carrying out their planned confrontation*. (p.8)

The tactical unit briefing on the morning of November 3rd ended shortly after 10:30 a.m. and the Tactical Unit officers were sent to an early lunch and told to be at their assignments at 11:30 a.m. ..(p.8)

[Demonstrators were shot and killed at about 11:18 a.m.]