The case of William Daniels first came to the attention of the Southern Negro Youth Congress when an account was read in the Birmingham News. It was reported as follows:

**TCI Police Officer Shoots Negro Suspect**

William Daniels, 21, Negro, 5606 Avenue E died at TCI hospital Saturday after having been shot in the chest by Westfield Camp Deputy J.W. Vanderford, E.L. Allman, chief of the Fairfield Police reported.

Chief Alman said Deputy Vanderford shot Daniels once after the Negro had put a hand into his pocket after being apprehended for questioning in regards to a complaint made by a white woman employee of the Union Supply Company store, Westfield.

The police chief said Vanderford was holding Daniels for questioning after being called to the commissary on a complaint the Negro had "made some insulting remarks."

Upon request of the family of William Daniels we intervened in the case, securing additional witnesses and turning these names over to the solicitors office. Following this the father of the victim and Attorney Arthur D. Shores went to the office of the acting solicitor asking him to issue a warrant for the arrest of Joe Vanderford, the murderer. This was refused but later witnesses were subpoenaed and testified before the Grand Jury in February. The jury returned a no bill this representing no indictment against Joe Vanderford.

The following recommendations are made with reference to next steps in the case, and also represents a summary of points.

1. There is no question that the guard Mr. J.W. Vanderford should be indicted.
2. The Youth Congress should recognize that some form of protection must be given witnesses who were intimidated.
3. The decision of the grand jury should be widely publicized.
4. It was urged a delegation visit the solicitor.
5. Efforts should be made to find out what questions were asked witnesses.
6. Money should be raised to defray the cost of those witnesses losing time from work.
7. If possible secure white witnesses to the shooting and any other possible new witnesses.
8. Attempt to determine which of witnesses already used can be recalled.
9. Another attempt should be made to ask the grand jury for an indictment.
I, Ruby Daniel, was in Westfield Union Supply Store, owned by the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company, December 21st, trading with my husband, William Daniel, and a friend, Joe Windham. We had been in the Dry Goods Department upstairs, and had come downstairs. As we came down the stairs, Sarah Davis, came to us and said that she had heard the store-clerk tell another clerk that a Negro had brushed up against her. The man asked who it was and the clerk answered that it was the one she had waited on last, Sarah Davis said to us that she saw the man in the office point at my husband, William Daniel. We looked up and saw the man come downstairs, keeping his eyes on William Daniel. He waited until the guard came in and then pointed to my husband. The watchman came over to us and told William to come outside and get in the car with him. I did not hear or see William say anything to the watchman when he told him to come outside. Joe Windham and I followed the watchman and William, about five feet behind the watchman and my husband. I did not hear the guard or my husband say anything as they walked out of the store. William and the watchman passed out of the glass door and on through the screen door, and on out to the sidewalk. Joe and I passed on out of the glass door. Just as we got to the screen door, the watchman shot my husband. William did not jump or move, or make any motion, such as moving his hands to his pocket, or his shirt, or his pants pocket. I was never away from my husband's side during all of the time that we were in the store, and I did not see him brush up against against any one, woman or man clerk, or anyone in the store, nor did I hear him say anything to anyone, except to ask about purchases and goods.

Signed Ruby Daniel

Witnesses Mary J. Lurry

C. A. Newton

Sworn and subscribed before me Feb. 16, 1947

Louise Hunter
Notary Public

February 16, 1947

My Commission Expires Oct. 11th, 1948
On December 21, 1946 the above named person in company with his wife and one Ruby Daniels and Joe Windham a friend were shopping or present in the Westfield Commissary when the husband of Ruby Daniels William Daniels was accused of brushing down a woman employee. Shortly thereafter a conversation between the woman and one Mr. Phillips who it seems was manager of the store followed at which time the woman employee told the manager of her accusation and stated she did not feel he had time to leave the store. During the time of this conversation a lady Sarah Davis overheard the conversation between the woman employee and the manager and hastened to warn him to leave the store. He is alleged to have stated that he did not commit any crime and he was not going. A few minutes later in another section of the store one John Vanderford approached him to take him outside or away and it is said by eyewitnesses that as he got Daniels just outside the store he fired wounding Daniels fatally.

Attempts have been made to interview as many witnesses as possible and to find the actual persons witnessing the shooting, but to date actual statements are available from only deceased wife and Joe Windham. These statements do accuse Vanderford of shooting the William Daniels and are notarized.

It seems that upon the shooting of her husband Ruby Daniels and her friend Joe Windham left the scene. He stated that he felt she was excited and it was best to take her home.
On the night of February 16, 1947, the undersigned, Edward K. Weaver, and Frank Hunter, in the presence of Robert Lemarr and Tom Rudolph and his step-father-in-law, requested Tom Rudolph to give us the true statement of what occurred at the Westfield Union Supply Store, December 21st, when William Daniel was shot down by a guard of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Commissary Store. Tom Rudolph told us that the following statement is the true statement of what actually occurred, and that while he had said, at first, that he did not see the shooting, that he now would state in court that he did see the shooting. Tom Rudolph said that he was on the sidewalk in front of the store, and he saw William Daniel and the guard come out of the store. When they reached the sidewalk Tom Rudolph saw another white man walking in or out of the store, and William Daniel and the guard. Tom Rudolph saw William Daniel jerk away from the guard, jump back about 10 or 12 feet (Tom Rudolph was sick in bed, and the bed was in the corner of the room, he pointed to the door from the bed to indicate the distance that William Daniel jumped away from the guard). William Daniel then reached up both hands and looked as if he was going into his shirt (Tom Rudolph stated that William Daniel wore a shirt, and no coat). Tom Rudolph stated that it looked as if William Daniel was going for a weapon of some kind. The guard shot William Daniel. Tom Rudolph stated that this statement was the true statement of what he would say in court. Edward Weaver and Frank Hunter asked Tom Rudolph if he would sign a notarized statement to this effect, and Tom Rudolph said he would not sign anything. Tom Rudolph stated that the same guard served a subpoena on him, and that the guard did not say anything to him. Edward Weaver asked Tom Rudolph if there was any conversation between Tom Rudolph and the guard when Tom Rudolph was served the subpoena. Tom Rudolph said that there was no conversation.

Frank Hunter had previously talked with Tom Rudolph at which time Tom Rudolph stated that William Daniel kept his hands at his side, and that William Daniel asked the guard why he was going to take him to the fire-station. Then the guard shot William Daniel, according to Tom Rudolph's first statement. Tom Rudolph stated, on the night of February 16, 1947, that he had worked for the T.C. & I. Company since 1927, that he had known the guard for several years. Tom Rudolph was present when William Daniel was searched by the Fairfield officers, as he lay on the sidewalk, and that the officers found no weapons of any kind, knife, gun, or other weapon, on William Daniel. Robert Lemarr stated that he heard William Daniel moan and cry out, as he lay on the sidewalk, that he, William Daniel, had been shot for nothing, and that God would punish him (the guard) for it. Robert Lemarr stated that he did not see the shooting.

Louise Hunter
Notary Public

My Commission Expires Oct 11, 1948

Signed Edward K. Weaver

before Frank Hunter

Sworn and subscribed by me Feb. 16, 1947
On Wednesday, February 12, 1947, the undersigned, Maenetta Steele and Florence Castihe, went to the home of Mr. Willie Hickman, to request that he give us the true statement of what occurred at the Westfield Union Supply Store, on Saturday, December 21, 1946 when William Daniel was shot. He stated that he did not see William Daniel shot, but arrived a few moments after it had occurred. He also stated that Mr. Tom Rudolph saw the shooting, and that Tom Rudolph told him (Willie Hickman) that he (Tom Rudolph) did not want to have anything to do with the case or incident.

Signed Florence A. Castihe

Maenetta Steele

Sworn and subscribed before me Feb. 16, 1947

Louise Hunter
Notary Public

My Commission Expires Oct. 11th, 1948
On December 21, 1947 I, Harrison Hamilton was standing in the Westfield Union Supply Store talking when I noticed the guard, Mr. Vanderford come rushing into the store. Then I noticed Mr. Phillips the store manager, rush towards Mr. Vanderford. Mr. Phillips pointed out Willie Daniels to Mr. Vanderford. I saw Mr. Vanderford touch Willie Daniels on the shoulder. I then saw Willie Daniels follow Mr. Vanderford out of the store. I was standing at the glass door. The two men passed me going out of the door.

When they got outside of the door, I couldn't hear what they were saying, but I saw them talk a little while. I did not see Willie Daniels reach toward his shirt or pants pocket. All of a sudden I saw Mr. Vanderford reach and get his gun and shoot Willie Daniels in the side. Willie Daniels threw up both hands and fell to the ground. Mr. Vanderford stood there for a few minutes and came back into the store. I stopped him and asked him, "What did the fellow do?" He said, "I don't know. Mr. Hicks and Mr. Phillips asked me to take him to the fire station. They wanted to talk with him."
I, Joe Ed. Windham was in the Westfield Union Supply Store on Sp. & Fairl (Commissary) on Saturday, December 21, 1946 with Ruby Daniel, William Daniel and two children. William Daniel had to go upstairs to have his papers okayed. When he came down, this woman came up to us and said that she heard a white woman clerk say that a Negro had brushed up against her. She told him he had better go out. William Daniel answered that he didn't do anything and he didn't have to run away. William Daniel, his wife Ruby and I continued to do our trading. About fifteen minutes afterwards the guard came in. He touched William Daniel and marched him out of the store ahead of him. I did not hear William Daniel say anything or make any move towards his pockets. He walked out of the store quietly. As he got to the outside of the door, the guard fired once. He shot him through the side. William Daniel fell to the ground. He was taken to the T.C.I. hospital and died later the same day he died as I was giving him blood.

Signed Joe Ed. Windham
This case first came to the attention of the Southern Negro Youth Congress when an account of the incident was read in the Birmingham News. It was reported as follows:

Mr. Arthur Price, Special Projects Director of the Southern Negro Youth Congress then went to Fairfield, Alabama to visit the home of Willie Daniels. At that time he talked with Mrs. Ruby Daniels, wife of Willie Daniels, and Mr. Joe Windham; friend of Willie Daniels, who was in the Westfield Union Supply Store with the deceased at the time of his death. Mrs. Sarah Davis of Westfield, Alabama was also interviewed the same day.

A few days later Mrs. Ruby Daniels, her grandmother Mrs. Terrell, came to the Southern Negro Youth Congress office and met with the staff and Attorney Arthur Shores. The Southern Negro Youth Congress was then authorized by Mrs. Daniels to secure legal counsel in her behalf for the purpose of bringing action in the courts against Mr. Vanderford who shot and killed her husband in the Westfield Union Supply Store on December 21, 1946.

Mr. Shores, the attorney, Mr. Daniels, father of the deceased, and Mr. Arthur Price, Special Projects Director of the S.N.Y.C. went to Bessemer to the Solicitor's office to secure a warrant for the arrest of Mr. J.W. Vanderford, the guard who killed Willie Daniels. The elected solicitor had just been drowned, so there was an acting solicitor in office. He refused to issue a warrant on the grounds that he had not heard of the case.
The staff of the Southern Negro Youth Congress then decided to secure a Willie Daniels Defense Committee of key people in the community who could possibly bring pressure on the solicitor to issue a warrant and take action on the case. It was anticipated that this group might continue to function as a Civil Rights Committee.

Petitions were then distributed throughout Birmingham and nearby areas. An appeal was also made for witnesses to the crime to contact Attorney Shores and turn over any information they might have.

Mr. Frank Hunter of the Ace Detective Agency was employed to investigate the case and to secure witnesses.

Very little publicity was given the case on the advice of the attorney who felt that pressure should be withheld until after the case was presented before the grand jury.

Mr. Shores, the attorney, called upon the newly elected solicitor and turned over the names of three witnesses which had been given him by the investigator, Mr. Frank Hunter. The solicitor agreed to have them summoned and to present the case before the grand jury when it convened beginning February 17, 1947.

Miss Florence Castile, Organizational Secretary, of the S.N.Y.C. was assigned to find out the union local number of these witnesses with the hope of securing some cooperation from the union officials in warding off some of the intimidation of the company personnel. This was done but in the process of securing the information it became obvious that this witness had not been interviewed by the investigator and that he probably was truthful in his statement that he did not actually witness the killing.

As a result the investigator was called in and it was discovered that he had been to see only one of the men whose names he had turned in.

On Sunday, February 16, 1947 Dr. Edward Weaver, President of the S.N.Y.C., Miss Florence Castile, Organizational Secretary of the S.N.Y.C., Mr. Frank Hunter, the investigator, Mrs. Louise Hunter, notary public went to Fairfield and Westfield Alabama. Rev. Williams of Fairfield was first visited as it had been reported to the Youth Congress that he had made a private investigation of the case, as the minister of the deceased, and had secured some names of possible witnesses. He denied that he had made any such investigation. Mr. Robert LaMarr was then interviewed. He was one of the three names which had been turned over to the solicitor. He stated that he did not witness the shooting but came outside of the commissary after it was all over. He stated that he heard the boy (Willie Daniels) say, "They shot me for nothing." Mr. LaMarr agreed to go with this group to Westfield to see the other witnesses.
Mr. Tom Rudolph was then interviewed by Dr. Weaver, Mr. Hunter and Mrs. Rudolph by Miss Castile. A statement of both interviews is enclosed. The group then went to the home of Mrs. Ruby Daniels to go over her statements with her in order to compare them with those of Tom Rudolph. Her statement is also enclosed. Several efforts were made to reach Mr. Joe Windham but to no avail.

On Monday, February 17, 1947 Mrs. Ruby Daniels accompanied by her mother came to the S.N.Y.C. office. She was advised to do the following things: 1. Correct the distorted story she had told Attorney Francis Hare who is handling the civil suit as to her physical condition. (She had been advised by a relative to tell him she was pregnant. She was not). 2. Employ a lawyer to handle her estate. (She has signed statements the meaning of which are not clear to her). 3. Invest part of her insurance money in bonds, and use as little of this money as possible. 4. That she should return to high school and give some thought to her future plans. 5. That she should be conscious of the eyes of the community on her in critical judgement of her behavior. 6. That she should thoroughly understand the interest of the S.N.Y.C. in her case and that she should feel free to some to this organization with any problems that she might have.

On Tuesday, February 18, 1947, Miss Florence Castile and Mr. J.E. Lowery, member of the Willie Daniels Defense Committee, went to Westfield in search of new witnesses. They were able to secure three statements. These statements are enclosed. The men seemed at that time free of any fear of testifying.

In lieu of the fact that the guard Mr. Venderford had served the other two subpoenas, Miss Castile requested that Attorney Shores contact the Solicitor’s office and assure the serving of these subpoenas by some other person. This was done. On Wednesday, February 19, 1947 Miss Castile and Mr. Shores went back to Westfield to check on the testimony of the witnesses again. In the process, it was discovered that while Mr. Venderford did not serve these subpoenas, he had told one of the men, Mr. Henry Bradley, that a subpoena was there for him. He also told him that he was sure that all of these men were going to tell the truth. He stated that he was sorry that he had shot the boy, but did so when he was angry. It was obvious that Mr. Bradley was not going to make a good witness as he stated that he had to still live there.

On Thursday February 20, 1947 Miss Castile and Mr. Shores went to the Bessemer Court House. All the witnesses were there with the exception of Joe Windham, whom we had not been able to contact previously. We learned later however that he did appear before the Grand Jury.

On Saturday, Mr. Shores was notified that the Grand Jury had passed a NO BILL decision.
Summary and Recommendations

1. There is no question that the guard Mr. J.W. Vanderford should be indicted.

2. The Youth Congress should recognize that some form of protection and reassurance must be given these witnesses who were obviously terribly intimidated.

3. The decision of the Grand Jury should be widely publicized.

4. The committee should begin to go to the solicitor in delegations to pressure him to present the case in its true perspective and merit.

5. Some efforts should be made to find out what questions were asked of the witnesses and what answers were given.

6. Money must be raised to defray the cost of the witnesses who lose time from work.

7. White witnesses to the shooting must be secured.

8. New Negro witnesses must be secured.

9. Some efforts must be made to determine which of the witnesses who have already testified can be used again.

10. The case should be presented before the next Grand Jury when it meets in April.

11. Contact should be established with Attorney Hare's office so that anything of mutual benefit to both cases is exchanged.
January 29, 1947

Mr. Arthur Price of the S.N.Y.C. staff called together a meeting of interested citizens to set up a committee, which would have as its immediate objective to take action on the Willie Daniels case, and suggested that this committee on a long term basis might function as a citizens' Civil Rights Committee.

Those present at the meeting were as follows: Mrs. Sachs, Mr. Bowery, Rev. Claude Williams, Mr. J.B. Sims, Mr. W.E. Shortridge, Mrs. Ruby Daniels, Mrs. Terry, Mr. C.G. Christian, Mr. Emory Jackson, Miss Florence Castile.

The following decisions were made on the basis of discussion on the case. (1) That it be suggested to Attorney Francis Hare, who has been employed to represent Mrs. Daniels in a civil suit that he contact Attorney Arthur Shores, who has been employed by the Southern Negro Youth Congress to take the murder suit, and collaborate in the hopes that there will be mutual benefit to the two lawyers in winning both suits. (2) That the members of the committee who were present last night circulate the petitions asking for the solicitors office of Bessemer to prosecute the offender in the murder of Willie Daniels. (3) That Rev. Marmion be contacted in the hopes that he will serve on the committee to call on the solicitor and contact other people who will also serve, so that there is enough pressure on the solicitor to warrant an indictment of John Vanderford. (4) That the Southern Negro Youth Congress, under the direction of Mr. Arthur Price, continue to take the initiative and responsibility for seeing that this committee is informed on all steps taken and that this organization sees the case through to the finish. (5) That the members of the committee who were present will contact other individuals throughout the city who might serve on the committee to see the solicitor, so that an impressive delegation of key people will force him into some kind of action. (6) That increased publicity be given to the case through the local press, which will probably be occasioned by the amount of work that is done by the committee to get expression from citizens throughout the city. (7) That as many people on the committee who were present as possible will meet with Attorney Shores on Wednesday morning at 11.30 to discuss perspective and strategy.

Respectfully submitted,

Florence A. Castile
Acting Secretary
On December 21, 1946, I, Lin Allen, was sitting on the garbage can in front of the Westfield Union Supply Store when I saw Mr. Van come out of the store followed by Willie Daniels. I heard Willie Daniels say, "What do you want with me?" Mr. Vanderford said, "Come on to the fire station." Willie Daniels said, "I ain't going anywhere. I haven't done anything," Mr. Van walked over to him and grabbed him by the shoulder and said, "Come on." Willie Daniels snatched away and backed toward the steps.

Mr. Van said, "Come on nigger." Willie Daniels put his hand towards his pants pocket. Mr. Van said, "Nigger, take your hand away from your pocket." Willie Daniels kept poking toward his pocket. Mr. Van said, "Nigger, take your hand away from your pocket.

Then I saw Mr. Van reach for his gun and shoot Willie Daniels. He stood for a few minutes and then fell to the ground.

Signed: (Lin Allen)

Witnessed by Lucille Allen

Sworn and subscribed before me this the 16 day of February, 1947. My commission expires February 21, 1950

Notary Public
On December 21, 1946, I, Henry Bradley, was standing outside of the Westfield Union Supply Store about four or five feet from the door. When I first saw the guard Mr. Van had his back to the door and Willie Daniels was facing the guard (and the door).

Mr. Van said, "Niggar, take your hand away from your bosom. I saw Willie Daniels change the tickets from one hand to the other. Then Mr. Van said, "Niggar, take your hand away from your bosom," and then drew his gun and shot Willie Daniels.

Willie Daniels clenched his side and fell to the ground.

Signed: [Signature]
Henry Bradley

Witnessed by: [Signature]

Sworn and subscribed before me this the day of [Date], 1947
My commission expires February 21, 1950

[Signature]
Joseph E. Lowery
On December 21, 1947, I, Harrison Hamilton, was standing in the Westfield Union Supply Store talking when I noticed the guard, Mr. Vanderford. I saw Mr. Vanderford rush toward Mr. Vanderford, Mr. Phillips, and pointed out Willie Daniels to Mr. Vanderford. I saw the store manager, rush toward Mr. Vanderford. I saw Mr. Vanderford rush toward Mr. Vanderford, Mr. Phillips. Then I saw Willie Daniels follow Mr. Vanderford out of the store. I was standing at the glass door. The two men passed me going out of the door.

When they got outside of the door, I couldn't hear what they were saying, but I saw them talk a little while. I did not see Willie Daniels reach toward his shirt or pants pocket. All of a sudden I saw Mr. Vanderford reach and get his gun and shoot Willie Daniels to the ground. Mr. Vanderford stood there for a few minutes and came back into the store. I stopped him and asked him, "What did the fellow do?" He said, "I don't know. Mr. Nick and Mr. Phillips asked me to take him to the fire station. They wanted to talk with him."
Then he walked on towards the back of the store.

Signed

Witnessed by

Sworn and subscribed before me this day February 18, 1947

My commission expires February 21, 1950
On the night of February 16, 1947, the undersigned, Edward K. Weaver, and Frank Hunter, in the presence of Robert Lamarr and Tom Rudolph and his step-father-in-law, requested Tom-Rudolph to give us the true statement of what occurred at the Westfield Union Supply Store, December 21st, when William Daniel was shot down by a guard of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Commissary Store. Tom Rudolph told us that the following statement is the true statement of what actually occurred, and that while he had said, at first, that he did not see the shooting, that he now would state in court that he did see the shooting. Tom Rudolph said that he was on the sidewalk in front of the store, and he saw William Daniel and the guard come out of the store. When they reached the sidewalk Tom Rudolph saw another white man walking in or out of the store, and William Daniel and the guard. Tom Rudolph saw William Daniel jerk away from the guard, jump back about 10 or 12 feet (Tom Rudolph was in bed, and the bed was in the corner of the room, he pointed to the door from the bed to indicate the distance that William Daniel jumped away from the guard). William Daniel then reached up both hands and looked as if he was going into his shirt (Tom Rudolph stated that William Daniel wore a shirt, and no coat). Tom Rudolph stated that it looked as if William Daniel was going for a weapon of some kind. The guard shot William Daniel. Tom Rudolph stated that this statement was the true statement of what he would say in court. Edward Weaver and Frank Hunter asked Tom Rudolph if he would sign a notarized statement to this effect, and Tom Rudolph said he would not sign anything. Tom Rudolph stated that the same guard served a subpoena on him, and that the guard did not say anything to him. Edward Weaver asked Tom Rudolph if there was any conversation between Tom Rudolph and the guard when Tom Rudolph was served the subpoena. Tom Rudolph said that there was no conversation.

Frank Hunter had previously talked with Tom Rudolph at which time Tom Rudolph stated that William Daniel kept his hands at his side, and that William Daniel asked the guard why he was going to take him to the fire-station. Then the guard shot William Daniel, according to Tom Rudolph's first statement.

Tom Rudolph stated, on the night of February 16, 1947, that he had worked for the T.C. & I. Company since 1927, and that he had known the guard for several years. Tom Rudolph was present when William Daniel was searched by the Fairfield officers, as he lay on the sidewalk, and the officers found no weapons of any kind, knife, gun, or other weapon, on William Daniel. Robert Lamarr stated that he heard William Daniel mean and cry out, as he lay on the sidewalk, that he, William Daniel, had been shot for nothing, and that God would punish him (the guard) for it. Robert Lamarr stated that he did not see the shooting.

Louise Hunter  
Notary Public  
Ms. Commission Expires Oct. 11th, 1948

Signed Edward K. Weaver

Frank Hunter

Sworn and subscribed before me Feb. 16, 1947
We the undersigned do hereby condemn the willful murder of Willie Daniel on December 21st at the Westfield Commissary by the T.C.I. guard, John Vanderford and its complete ignorance by officials charged with investigation of such crimes. We feel that the repeated offenses of this type in our community cannot lead to the building of a democratic spirit and that feeling of unity so necessary for building a peaceful productive world. To constantly allow such acts to go unpunished is a blight upon the good name of this state and our entire nation.

The blood of many were shed to defy the evils of such oppression abroad. Similar oppression must stop in our own country.

We do hereby petition the solicitors office of Bessemer, Alabama to take such action as is necessary to prosecute the offender in the willful murder of Willie Daniel.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>David E. Martin</td>
<td>1700 Page Ave., Birmingham</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Jarvis</td>
<td>3504 1st Ave.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>William Johnson</td>
<td>406 - 52nd St.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Hattie Lewis</td>
<td>416 - 52nd St.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Mary L. Anderson</td>
<td>1700 39th St.</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Mrs. W. Lewis</td>
<td>1121 N 24th St.</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Mrs. M. Smith</td>
<td>1720 Center St.</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna R. Henderson</td>
<td>500 1st Ave.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace Martin</td>
<td>1705 10th Ave.</td>
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<td>Louise Scott</td>
<td>632 - 4th St.</td>
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<td>Beatrice Tully</td>
<td>612 - 6th Ave.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eugene Hamilton</td>
<td>1716 - 55th St.</td>
<td>35</td>
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Issued by Southern Negro Youth Congress
528 Masonic Temple Bldg.
Birmingham 3, Ala.

Lucille Wilson
416 - 61st St.
We the undersigned do hereby condemn the willful murder of Willie Daniel on December 21st at the Westfield Commissary by the T.C.I. guard, John Vanderford and its complete ignorance by officials charged with investigation of such crimes. We feel that the repeated offenses of this type in our community cannot lead to the building of a democratic spirit and that feeling of unity so necessary for building a peaceful productive world. To constantly allow such acts to go unpunished is a blight upon the good name of this state and our entire nation.

The blood of many were shed to defy the evils of such oppression abroad. Similar oppression must stop in our own country.

We do hereby petition the solicitors office of Bessemer, Alabama to take such action as is necessary to prosecute the offender in the willful murder of Willie Daniel.

Name
8th Truth Baptist Church
Birmingham, Ala.

Address

Cont.
89.15

Issued by: Southern Negro Youth Congress
526 Masonic Temple Bldg.
Birmingham 3, Ala.
Name of Deceased: William Gaines
Name of Wife: Ruby Gaines
Name of Witnesses: Joe Windham, Lenn Allen

Name of Guard: J. W. Vanderford
Date of Murder: December 21, 1946
Name of Grandmother: Della Terry
Local Number: 157 T.C.I.
Name of Minister: Rev. E. W. Williams

Gaines was a 3 mo. Vet.

Staff of C.I.O.: Ashbery Howard, Alton Lawrence

Length of Employment:

Age of deceased:

Sarah Davie - 436 Oak Ave. W. T. Galloway
(Westfield) - conversation with eyewitness

Summary of facts:

Frank Hunter - 310 18th St., 80916

Man accused of brushing against white lady in commissary pointed out by woman. Finally followed outside and shot in back.

Witnesses:

Tim Allen 306 Laurel Road

[Signature]
State of Alabama
Jefferson County

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I the undersigned _____________
__________ do authorize the SNYC to secure legal
counsel. In my behalf for the purpose of bringing action in
the courts against ____________ who shot and killed my husband William Daniel
__________ at Westfield Commissary
on December 21, 1942

Ruby Daniel

WITNESSED BY MY HAND ON THIS DATE

Della Terry

Conduct Daniel
On February 16, 1947 I, Florence Castile in the presence of Mrs. Louise Hunter, talked with Mrs. Tom Rudolph. She stated that when her husband first told her of the shooting on December 21, 1946, he told her that Mr. Vanderford shot Willie Daniels for nothing. He said that Willie Daniels made no move toward his shirt or pants pocket. He further stated that at one time Willie Daniels put his hand to his side, but dropped it at the request of the guard.

Mrs. Rudolph stated that last week she looked through the window and saw Mr. Vanderford come up to her husband and summon him. She stated that she saw him hand the summons to Mr. Rudolph and then open the paper to point out something to him. Mr. Rudolph and the guard talked for a few minutes after that.

Mrs. Rudolph stated that she and her husband had discussed what he was going to say in court.

Signed Florence B. Castile

Sworn and subscribed before me Feb. 16, 1947

Louise Hunter
Notary Public

My Commission Expires Oct. 11th, 1948
I, Joe Ed Windham, was in the Westfield Union Supply Store (Commissary) on Saturday, December 21, 1946, with Ruby Daniel and William Daniel, and two children. Sarah Davis came up to us and said that she heard a white woman clerk in the store say that a Negro had brushed up against her. She told William Daniel that he had better go out. William Daniel answered that he didn't do anything and he didn't have to run away. William Daniel, his wife Ruby, and I continued to do our trading. About fifteen minutes afterwards the guard came in. He touched William Daniel and marched him out of the store ahead of him. I did not hear William Daniel say anything or make any move towards his pockets or shirt. Ruby and I walked after the guard and William, we were about five feet behind them. William Daniel walked out of the store quietly. As he got to the outside of the door, the guard fired at once. He shot him through the side. William Daniel fell to the ground. He was taken to the T.G. and I. Company hospital, and died later the same day, as I was giving him blood.

Signed ______________________

Sworn and subscribed before me

Notary Public
Jan. 9, 1947

I, Joe Windham, living at 5101 Ave. E, Fairfield do of my own volition and without promise of personal benefit or under duress make the following statement.

On December 21, 1946 I was in the company of Ruby Daniels and William Daniels at Westfield Commissary located at

We had been in the store some time and during all the time in the store I did not see William Daniels commit any act of flirtation or otherwise of untoward conduct. When we were together near the front of the store a man John Vanderford approached Daniels and asked him to go along as he got outside the store he fired shooting Daniels several times. I did not see Daniels ever reach toward his pockets or make him make any threatening remarks. I am sure that the shooting was without cause and would state to anyone in person it was murder.

WITNESSED BY MY HAND ON THIS DATE, Jan. 9, 1947

Joe Windham
State of Alabama
Jefferson County

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I, the undersigned _____________________________
do authorize the SWC to secure legal counsel. In my behalf for the purpose of bringing action in
the courts against _____________________________
who shot and killed my husband _____________________________
at _____________________________
on _____________________________.

____________________________________
WITNESSED BY MY HAND ON
THIS DATE _____________________________
We the undersigned do hereby condemn the willful murder of Willie Daniel on December 21st at the Westfield Commissary by a T.G.I. guard. Willie Daniel was shopping peacefully with his wife when he was brutally killed by the guard, John Vanderford. We condemn such acts and ask that the responsible officials in Bessemer bring the guilty party to justice.

We do hereby petition the solicitors office of Bessemer, Alabama to take such action as is necessary to prosecute the offender in the willful murder of Willie Daniel.

NAME               ADDRESS               Cont.
Matthew Baptist Church

Tupelo City, Ala.

Total: $6.15

Issued by the SOUTHERN NEGRO YOUTH CONGRESS
526 Masonic Temple Bldg.
Birmingham 5, Ala.
I, Ruby Daniel, was in the Westfield Union Supply store (Commissary) trading with my husband, William Daniel and Joe Windham. We had been in the dry goods department upstairs and came downstairs. As we came down the stairs, Lin Allen came to us and said she had heard the white clerk tell the store manager that a Negro had brushed up against her. The manager asked who it was and the clerk answered that it was the one she waited on last. She carried the ticket to the office and the man looked in the file and saw that it was William Daniel. Then as I was down stairs, I saw the man point to my husband and then he pointed my husband out to the watchman. The watchman went to him and told him to come outside and get in the car. My husband said nothing to him but went along with him. As they got just outside the door, the watchman shot him and he fell to the sidewalk.

Signed

Witnesses

[Signature]
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I the undersigned ___________________________ do authorized the SNYC to secure legal council in my behalf for the purpose of bringing action in the courts against ___________________________ ___________________________ who shot and killed my husband ___________________________ ___________________________ at ___________________________ on ___________________________.

_________________________________

WITNESSED BY MY HAND ON THIS DATE ___________________________________________
| 1. Union  | Dr. Williams |

Mr. Hagler
Mr. Cherry

Mr. Dale to Winona 7-3
Rt. 4, Box 226

Anthony Howard
3101 19th Ave
210 1/2 N. 19th
1st Nov '93
Names were turned over to solicitor.

3. Whiteside undertakers - Fairfield

4. Coroner's report

5. Ed Hamilton - Candy Store
   Miss Rankin
   Mr. Jim Allen 7806 Dancil Road
   Mrs. Ruby Daniels - 89066
   502 510 th St.
   Riley Taylor
   Mr. Newton 3:30 PM 87330
I, Ruby Daniel, was in the Westfield Union Supply Store (Commissary) on Saturday, December 21st trading with my husband, William Daniel and a friend Joe Windham. We had been in the dry goods department upstairs and came downstairs. As we came down the stairs, Sarah Davis came to us and said she had heard the white clerk tell the store clerk—a man who worked in the office that a Negro had brushed up against her. The man asked who it was the clerk answered that it was the one she waited on last. She had carried the ticket to the office and the man looked in the file and saw that it was William Daniel. Bin Allen said to us that she saw the man point to my husband. We looked up and we saw the clerk (mile) come downstairs keeping his eye on William. Then he waited until the watchman came in and them he pointed to William. The watchman came over to us and told William to come outside and get in the car with him. I did not hear or see William say anything to him and he went with him as he was asked to do. As they got just outside the door, the watchman shot him and he fell to the sidewalk.

While we were trading in the store I did not see him brush up against the woman clerk or have anything to say to her.

Signed Ruby Daniel

Witnesses Della Terry

Sandhist Daniel

Loggo Carter
On December 21, 1946 I, Henry Bradley, was standing outside of the Westfield Union Supply Store about four or five feet from the door. When I first saw the guard Mr. Van had his back to the door and Willie Daniels was facing the guard (and the door).

Mr. Van said, "Nigger, take your hand away from your bosom. I saw Willie Daniels change the tickets from one hand to the other. Then Mr. Van said, "Nigger, take your hand away from your bosom", and then drew his gun and shot Willie Daniels.

Willie Daniels clenched his side and fell to the ground.

Signed

Witnessed by

Sworn and subscribed before me this the day of , 1947
My commission expires February 21, 1950

[Signature]
On December 21, 1946 I, Lin Allen, was sitting on the garbage can in front of the Westfield Union Supply Store when I saw Mr. Van come out of the store followed by Willie Daniels. I heard Willie Daniels say, "What do you want with me?" Mr. Vanderford said, "Come on to the fire station". Willie Daniels said, "I ain't going anywhere. I haven't done anything". Mr. Van walked over to him and grabbed him by the shoulder and said, "Come on". Willie Daniels snatched away and backed toward the steps.

Mr. Van said, "Come on niggar". Willie Daniels put his hand towards his pants pocket. Mr. Van said, "Niggar, take your hand away from your pocket. Willie Daniels kept poking toward his pocket. Mr. Van said, "Niggar, take your hand away from your pocket.

Then I saw Mr. Van reach for his gun and shoot Willie Daniels. He stood for a few minutes and then fell to the ground.

Witnessed by Lin Allen

Signed

Witnessed by

Sworn and subscribed before me this the 17th day of February, 1947. My commission expires February 21, 1950

Joseph E. Loewy
Notary Public
enforcement officials in Southern communities, whose habitual attitude toward the Negro who comes athwart of the law—whether in uniform or not—is that he belongs at the small end of a gun. As we understand it, the Army has made plain the inadequacy of its authority in cases involving Negro soldiers and civilian authorities. This cannot be accepted by Negro youth as a satisfactory explanation. It is not conceivable to us that the same degradations suffered by Negro soldiers, if they had been visited upon white troops, would not have caused more effective action than has to date been evidenced, if for no other reason than that an aroused public opinion of the nation as a whole would have demanded and secured such action. Cases such as that of Raymond McHamry of recent memory and others equally infamous can only be allowed to occur again without retributive justice being meted out to the offenders, at the expense of the dangerous deterioration of the morale of Negro troops and civilians alike. We appeal to the War Department to find some way to be invested with authority to act decisively in such instances, and then to act whenever they occur. It is also our opinion that a more widespread dissemination of the findings of the War Department in such cases would do much to assure the Negro population that every necessary precaution is being taken to protect the lives of Negro troops.

It is our understanding that a recent War Department regulation has opened all post facilities, such as PX’s and theatres to all troops without regard to race. We wish to compliment the Department on this action.

The most recent occurrence which serves to impair the patriotic ardor of Negro Americans is, of course, the reliably reported growth of discrimination against Negro troops who are serving their country in England. This is a development which has been consciously and maliciously fostered by prejudiced officers and enlisted men in the U.S. Army and as such is inexpressibly reprehensible. There is nothing in the past experience of the people of England which can explain or justify this development. The extension of simple courtesy and the precept of equality to Negro troops would not have been a "sociological experiment" in Britain. Just the other way around. The introduction of prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory practices against Negroes is in violation of the wholesome democratic tradition of the British commoner with regard to the question of color.

The world as a unit is rapidly contracting. Our status as Americans and as world citizens is worsened insofar as bigoted American officers are permitted to convince the English people, despite their better judgment and the evidence of their physical senses, that Negroes have tails, that we are uncouth as a race, that we are slovenly and incompetent, that we are rapists. We resent this imposition of the most backward Southern pattern upon the friendly relations which thousands of Negro troops have developed with our British Allies— and we cannot too plainly state our resentment. We call upon the War Department to deal firmly with the purveyors of racial hatred in foreign lands and to enlist the services of Negro officer personnel for the maintenance of the cordial relations which would ordinarily exist between Negro troops and the civilian population in allied and liberated lands.

In closing, we cannot emphasize too strongly the spirit in which this statement is made. The organization under whose auspices this public appeal was issued, the Southern Negro Youth Congress, is committed to wholly and irrevocably to the cause of speedy victory. We are mindful of the imminence of the invasion of Europe by allied troops and
Then he walked on towards the back of the store.

Signed

Witnessed by

Sworn and subscribed before me this day February 18, 1947  
My commission expires February 21, 1950