You will notice that in several counties there is not a single Negro voter. In most of these counties the Negroes outnumber the whites two or three to one. In one county, namely, Macon County, the officials of the state have absolutely refused to appoint a registration board simply because a number of Negroes sought to become registered voters.

We would appreciate your looking into this matter immediately. It is my conviction that foremost among the civil rights of citizens in a Democracy is the right to participate in the government through free exercise of the franchise. If the Federal Government does not step in to assure this right, it will probably never be given.

Sincerely yours,
M. L. King, Jr.,
President

MLK:b

enclosures
cc: Honorable Herbert Brownell, U.S. Attorney

TLC. MLKP-MBU: Box 66A.

Minutes of MIA
Executive Board Meeting, by W. J. Powell

18 September 1956
Montgomery, Ala.

These minutes, written by MIA recording secretary W. J. Powell, report on a special meeting called to discuss confidential information about an “anticipated or possible danger,” perhaps a threat by the North Alabama White Citizens Council to disrupt the bus boycott. In the 21 September MIA newsletter editor Jo Ann Robinson reported that a leader of that group had announced plans to come to Montgomery on 16 September to “divulge plans on how they were going to break up the Negro bus boycott.” She added that the engagement was “mysteriously cancelled.”

Minutes of special meeting of the Executive Board of the Montgomery Improvement Association, Tuesday, September 18, 1956.

The meeting was called to order by the President at 11:00 A.M. Opening prayer was offered by the Rev. S. Sanders.

Those present were: Dr. M. L. King, Jr., H. H. Johnson, Rev. J. W. Bonner, A. Sanders, H. J. Palmer, R. B. McCain, G. Franklin Lewis, R. W. Hilson, R. J. Glasco, W. J. Powell, Robert Graetz, White, R. B. Binion, R. D. Abernathy, Mrs. A. W. West, Mrs. Erna Dungee, Mr. P. E. Conely, Mrs. Jimmie Lowe, Attorney Charles Langford, Mrs. Jo Ann Robinson, Mr. Rufus Lewis. Several ministers, not members of the board were voted the privilege of staying in the meeting.
Rev. Robert Graetz was presented to give information which was responsible for the calling of this committee.¹

After Rev. Graetz had acquainted the body with confidential information which had acquainted come to him, the President stated that the course of action to be followed to meet the anticipated or possible danger was the question confronting the group.

After much discussion, it was moved and carried that this organization contact the U.S. Justice Department, the F.B.I., and influential local citizens in Washington, to acquaint them with the information which has come to us and seek their assistance and protection in this situation. It was further moved and carried that Governor James Folsom be contacted and informed of the situation before carrying out the decision of this body referred to immediately above.

The President appointed the following persons as members of the committee to contact the Governor: Rev. Robert Graetz, Mrs. Jo Ann Robinson, Attorney Charles Langford, Dr. M. L. King, Jr.

It was agreed that if a personal contact could be had in Washington with the Justice Department or F.B.I., the Rev. Robert Graetz and Dr. M. L. King, Jr. would constitute the committee.

Closing prayer was offered by Rev. G. Franklin Lewis.

The meeting then adjourned.

W. J. Powell, Secretary
M. L. King, Jr., President

TD. MLKP-MBU: Box 30.

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¹ Graetz may have presented information he received from Woodrow E. Draut, an agent in the Montgomery FBI office to whom Graetz reported on the bus boycott and received confidential information in return. Graetz considered the FBI as an ally whose activities deterred hostility and violence by local police and vigilantes. For more details on his participation in the bus boycott, see Graetz’s autobiography, Montgomery: A White Preacher’s Memoir (1991).

To Nannie H. Burroughs

18 September 1956
Montgomery, Ala.

Miss Nannie H. Burroughs, President
National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls
Lincoln Heights
Washington 19, D.C.

Dear Miss Burroughs:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your very kind letter of August 28, making inquiry concerning two high school and junior college teachers. First I must