

Who are the Nebraska Two?

Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa (aka then David Rice) are two former members of the Black Panther Party falsely imprisoned for a bombing that left one cop dead and several others injured. This case, known as the Omaha or Nebraska Two, is an example of the extent the U.S. government would go to undermine and destroy the Black liberation movement.

During the '60s, the FBI, under the control of J. Edgar Hoover declared a clandestine war on the Black Panthers and other "black nationalist" groups as part of an operation, known as COINTELPRO. A secret directive dated August 25, 1967 both authorized and mandated illegal harassment and targeting of domestic groups and U.S. citizens deemed a racial or political threat by Hoover.

In Omaha, the war on the Panthers was directed at a chapter of the party called the Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism headed by Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa. The attack on the two activists was personally directed by Hoover and his inner circle at the top of the FBI command structure.

Poindexter and we Langa had been targets of COINTELPRO for their leadership roles in the Black Panther affiliate and were disliked by most local police for their sharp criticism of the shooting death of 14 year-old Vivian Strong by police in the summer of 1969. Both men further inflamed police hostility by their repeated use of the word "pig" to describe police officers.

On August 17, 1970, a call was made to the police reporting a woman screaming at a vacant house near 28th Street and Ohio Street. When the Omaha Police Department arrived they noticed a suitcase sitting in the front room of the house. As patrolman Larry Minard attempted to pick up the suitcase, a powerful blast killed the patrolman and injured seven others officers.

While uniform officers ran a dragnet arrest-

ing dozens of people in the hours and days following the bombing, the FBI to hatched a plot to convict Poindexter and we Langa rather than find Minard's actual killers. Hoover, with the help of the chief of the Omaha PD, gave an order to make a case against the NCCF leaders. Hoover's directive was recorded on a COINTELPRO memo issues the day of the bombing.

During the first two weeks proceeding the bombing, police arrested a young man named Duane Peak. Police managed to get Peak to admit to being involved in the incident. Peak was offered a deal and became the state's chief witness against the two Panther leaders in exchange for a short sentence and his freedom. To keep the case from unraveling it was necessary for Peak to have been the caller as he claimed.



Authorities managed to record the voice of the man that lured the police to the location. The voice on the recording was clearly an older man and not that of a young boy. Both the FBI and the Omaha PD saw that the recording, if used as evidence, might work against them and decided not to use the tape until after the men had been convicted.

During a hearing, Peak took the stand and recanted his story connecting Poindexter and we Langa to the incident. After a recess, Peak changed his story yet again and implicated the two men. Peak at the time was wearing glasses and when asked to remove them, he clearly had been beaten. We Langa's attorney asked Peak if he was threatened during the recess and had

discussed his confession during the break with anyone, Peak answered in the affirmative.

In addition to Peak's testimony, the state offered three pieces of dynamite found in Rice's home as evidence. The officers could not find Rice and Poindexter's fingerprints on the dynamite, and there was no clear answer as to the exact location the dynamite was discovered in Rice's house. Accusations have since been made, even by an ex-police officer Marvin McClarty, that the dynamite might have been planted.

Poindexter and we Langa were tried by a jury of eleven whites and one black person. Deliberations lasted four days before both men found guilty. The judge sentenced both of them to life. The lone black juror later stated he accepted the guilt of the pair on the condition that the death sentence was not asked for.

The tape recording was successfully kept from the defense and the jury that convicted Poindexter and we Langa never got to hear the voice that made the fatal call. The original recording was destroyed several years after the trial and then in 1980 a reel-to-reel copy of the tape was found, quietly made by a dispatcher.

In 2005, the reel-to-reel was discovered. One year later, the recording was submitted to modern vocal analysis. Expert Tom Owens determined the voice on the tape was not that of Duane Peak, a conclusion apparently also reached at the FBI Laboratory back in 1970 when the tape was withheld.

Peak served several years of juvenile detention and then gained his freedom. The unknown caller whose voice was captured on tape was never identified or brought to justice. Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa are serving life sentences at the maximum-security Nebraska State Penitentiary. Both men deny any involvement in Minard's murder.

Recent statements made by one of the officers who testified at the trial, Sgt. Pheffer has raised some issues regarding the case. It seems that a recent version of the events told by Sgt.

Pfeffer strongly suggests he might have perjured himself. Not only has he recently contradicted his own 1971 testimony about whether he or another officer had discovered the dynamite. But he now claims to have found bomb-making material at we Langa's house and the NCCF headquarter.

Shortly after the conviction, we Langa's house mysteriously burned to the ground, eliminating any possibility of exploring the accuracy of police testimony about the dynamite.

In June 2008, Poindexter lost an appeal arguing that he should have been released by 1988 because other inmates sentenced to life for first-degree murder were granted sentence commutations and paroled from prison within 17 to 18 years. He also argued that a law was in place when he was sentenced that allowed him to be considered for parole "at any time." The Nebraska Supreme Court sided with the Parole Boards refusal to consider Poindexter as a parole candidate. The Parole Board has taken the position that those convicted of first-degree murder are not eligible for parole because they won't complete the minimum life sentence before the die.

In October 2008, Poindexter appealed to the Nebraska Supreme Court to grant him a new trial. The key argument by Poindexter is that the authorities hid the tape recording allegedly made by Peak. The tape could have altered the decision made by the jury. The case had to be decided.

On March 11th, 2016, Mondo we Langa died in a prison hospital after losing a battle with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

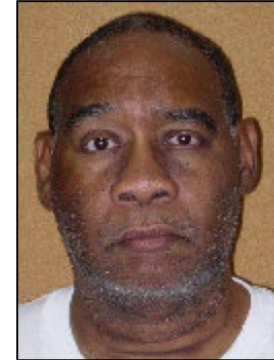
Free the Nebraska Two

Write to the Nebraska 2 at:
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Local groups supporting Maliki:
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Nebraska Two



**ED
POINDEXTER**



**MONDO
WE LANGA**

**Two Black Panthers
in Prison for Life for a Crime
They Did Not Commit**

