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# Omahans join call for probe of ATF over missing teen in Omaha Two case

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Fourteen year-old Marialice Clark disappeared in August 1972 after being named in a ATF affidavit  
*Ed Clark*

The call for an investigation of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Division over missing teen **Marialice Clark** has gained supporters in Omaha, where the fourteen year-old disappeared in August 1972. Before her disappearance, Marialice had been named as an informant by ATF agent **Thomas Sledge**, a former Omaha policeman. Marialice's brother, Ed Clark of Arkansas, has asked for public help with an **online petition** to get an investigation into ATF actions against his sister and to find out what the federal agency knows about her disappearance.

Thomas Sledge spearheaded a four-state ATF task force against twenty-two people who allegedly conspired to bomb public buildings. All twenty-two were black. Sledge's investigation, dubbed the **Midwest 22** case, was cancelled by U.S. Attorney Richard Dier after the federal prosecutor refused to bring Sledge's far-flung conspiracy case to trial. Assistant U.S. Attorney William Gallup resigned when

the Justice Department cancelled Sledge's search warrant in July 1970 for the headquarters of the National Committee to Combat Fascism. The search warrant was based on an affidavit of Sledge that Marialice had seen cases of dynamite and Russian machine guns in the headquarters. In reviewing Sledge's affidavit, the Justice Department decided that Marialice, then twelve years-old, was "unreliable."

Two of the Midwest 22 targets were Edward Poindexter and [Mondo we Langa](#), then David Rice. Both men, now known as the **Omaha Two**, were convicted for the August 17, 1970 bombing murder of Omaha Patrolman Larry Minard, Sr. after a controversial trial that featured four ATF witnesses, including Thomas Sledge. The **Omaha Two** were the leaders of the National Committee to Combat fascism, a Black Panther offshoot.

Phyllis Hicks, of Omaha, has added her voice to the call for an investigation: "David Rice and I grew up on the same block in Omaha, in fact babysitting him and his brothers was my first paid job. I have kept in touch with him throughout the years and I believe he and Ed were convicted of a crime they did not commit. It's sad when a country like America has to back up the law enforcement even when they are wrong to put fear in others to conform."

Pamela Owens, a lifetime resident of Omaha, also has spoken out for a probe of the local ATF office: "I lived in that neighborhood with VISTA volunteers in 1969 and felt safe because of the neighborhood policing done by the young men in the United Front Against Facism. They were the opposite of violent terrorists. They were all about keeping North Omaha safe, including safe from racist police violence. They made sure all of the ladies who walked to the bus stops early in the morning, often when it was still dark, to take the long bus ride out to work as maids in rich white homes, were safe until their bus came. Even the local FBI stated that the group was no threat. But the ATF cooked up a frame up against them and used this young girl as part of their case, then made sure her disappearance was not investigated. Her brother deserves an answer about what happened to her."

Omahan Barbara Head says an investigation of ATF's role in the case is long overdue: "I have seen what happened to Omaha panthers who were friends and read the book describing the Chicago purge killing of Fred Hampton. I believe that ATF is capable of making an innocent schoolgirl disappear and it's long past time for investigation."

Omaha freelance journalist Kietryn Zychal has long been seeking answers about the Omaha ATF agents and wants the public to have access to the truth. Zychal said, "It's time to release all files and get to the truth of everything that happened in 1970."

Sarah Polachek, of Omaha, says, "I believe this case needs to be resolved, and transparency needs to be a top priority and an investigation launched through the full disclosure of these documents."

Omahan Charles Clowers adds, "I worked on the 1991 British documentary and cannot believe that

Rice and Poindexter are still in jail and this has never been investigated.”

Omaha artist Bonnie Cosentino has followed the Omaha Two case for years. Bonnie urges an investigation into the disappearance of Marialice Clark.

“This City will never heal from the atrocities carried out against several young people during the 1970's Civil Rights era. Justice is long overdue. We've all seen this photo of Marialice over the years and it haunts us. It's clear that her only crime was living close to a house that was a Black Panther headquarters. This was a group that was keeping the peace, but was targeted by corrupt agencies in the [government](#). They tried to make her a phony witness against the Black Panthers. It didn't work, and then she mysteriously disappeared. What happened to her? Mondo we Langa and [Ed Poindexter](#) remain political prisoners today. They were railroaded in a dubious trial, filled with illegalities and omissions, and this is their 45th year behind bars. I believe that Marialice was a threat to the corrupt people who tried to use her, and that's why she disappeared. This story must be investigated, the truth must come out for this City to begin to heal. We have not forgotten the horrific wrongs perpetrated against the innocent. Please investigate, not only for her family, but for all of us.”

Omahan Kelly Keller says there is a duty to investigate, “I think it is imperative we do what we can to correct the abuses of the past.”

Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa were also targets of the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the clandestine [COINTELPRO](#) operation. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI Laboratory to withhold a report on the identity of the anonymous 911 caller that lured Patrolman Minard to his death. The jury that convicted the Omaha Two did not know the trial had been tampered with by the FBI. Both men are serving life sentences without parole at the Nebraska State Penitentiary where they continue to proclaim their innocence.

Kenneth Stewart says, “This case is a wound in the soul of Omaha, please investigate.”



**Michael Richardson**

COINTELPRO Examiner

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