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Author & Addressee

Author (Internal) : Jerry N. Owens-C-

Addressee : Guyron C. Watts

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AUTHOR: JERRY N. OWENS-C-
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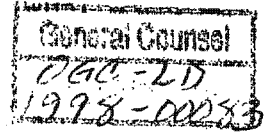
LETTER FROM DOJ TO GUY WATTS RE: REVIEWING FILES
PERTAINING TO THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN
LUTHER KING, JR.

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U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division



BLL:BFK:bbm
DJ 144-72-1991

*Criminal Section
P.O. Box 66018
Washington, DC 20035-6018*

DEC 22 1998

Mr. Guy Watts
Central Intelligence Agency
Office of the General Counsel
Route 123
Langley, Virginia 22101

Dear Mr. Watts:

As you are aware, I have been instructed by the Attorney General to conduct an investigation into certain new allegations regarding the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. One of the allegations relates to matters about which a current employee of your agency, Marrell McCollough, has personal knowledge as a result of his work as an undercover agent for the Memphis Police Department at the time of the King assassination. Mr. McCollough's cooperation with our investigation has been appreciated.

As you and I discussed last week, information in your agency's files developed when Mr. McCollough was hired in 1974 has become relevant to our investigation. As you suggested, I am requesting the opportunity to review that information. Specifically, we would like to review all documents and materials related to the hiring of Mr. McCollough in 1974, to include information gathered during his background investigation, any record of information he provided regarding his background during the hiring process, and the results of a pre-hiring polygraph examination, if one was administered. Additionally, we would like to review all records that relate to any prior relationship Mr. McCollough may have had with your agency, if indeed he had such a relationship, prior to his full-time employment in 1974, such as informant or intelligence asset.

We have discussed why this information is relevant to our investigation. We do not believe that our review of thirty-year-old information, which is relevant to a Department of Justice

investigation about an incident that occurred prior to Mr. McCollough's full-time employment with your agency, should present any disclosure concerns. But, of course, I will be willing to discuss any issues you determine to be germane.

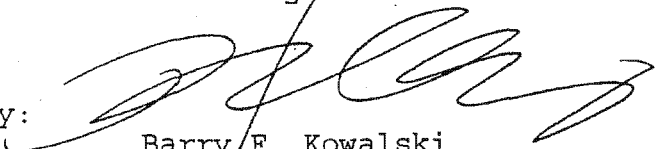
Please advise as soon as possible how our requested review can be accomplished or whether there are issues we need to discuss. As you know, we hope to speak with Mr. McCollough again after a review of the above-mentioned materials and our interview of other parties that also have information relevant to the matters we discussed with Mr. McCollough.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter related to an important Department of Justice investigation. You can reach me at 202-514-4067.

Sincerely,

Bill Lann Lee
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division

By:



Barry F. Kowalski
Special Litigation Counsel
Criminal Section