

2
ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 14

NEWSDAY
13 APRIL 1977

Billett, Myron
~~King, Martin Luther~~
CIA 875 House Assass
ctt

A New King Death Plot

Federal authorities attached little significance yesterday to an Ohio Penitentiary inmate's claim that FBI and CIA agents offered a New York underworld figure a \$1-million contract in 1968 to kill Martin Luther King Jr.

The latest account of an assassination plot, reported in a copyrighted story by Scripps-Howard Newspapers, will be investigated by the House Select Committee on Assassinations, although not immediately.

Myron Billett, 52, alias Paul Buccilli, told Scripps-Howard Newspapers that he set up a meeting in January, 1968, at a motel in Appalachia, N.Y., between the federal agents and the late Carlo Gambino. Billett, who also claims to be a former undercover agent for the FBI, said he was told that the offer to kill King was approved by the late FBI director J. Edgar Hoover. Gambino, according to Billett, rejected the offer and later passed the word that no New York City crime family would accept the \$1-million assassination contract.

Billett said that he didn't come forward with the information before "because I didn't think anyone would believe me."

The committee's chief investigator, Ed Evans, said he would look into the charge. "We can't procede on it immediately," he said. The committee chairman, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Cleveland), said that the committee has to "move cautiously. We want to be careful that people coming forward now won't be using us for publicity purposes." —Les Payne

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-5

WASHINGTON STAR (GREEN LINE)
13 APRIL 1977

Gambino, Carlo
Billett, Myron
~~King, Martin~~ Luf.
R-P: HAE, William

Inmate Tells of FBI, CIA Offer in King's Death

COLUMBUS (UPI) — An inmate at the Ohio Penitentiary Reception and Treatment Center here said the FBI and CIA agents offered former Mafia kingpin Carlo Gambino \$1 million to kill Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, but Gambino rejected the offer, it was reported yesterday.

Scripps-Howard Newspapers, in a copyrighted story by William Pillar, said Myron Billett, 52, will be questioned by Ed Evans, chief investigator for the House assassinations committee in Washington.

The newspapers said Billett, alias Paul Buccilli, set up a secret meeting in January 1968 at a hideaway motel in Apalachin, N.Y., between the FBI

and CIA agents and Gambino, who has since died.

Gambino rejected the offer and later passed the word that no Mafia family would accept the offer to kill King, Billett said.

Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, chairman of the assassinations committee, said he ordered Evans to investigate the allegations after Scripps-Howard newspapers asked Stokes if a letter sent by Billett to House Speaker Thomas O'Neill had been turned over to the committee.

O'Neill's office told the newspapers that the letter had not been located.

"We will be in touch with Billett to check out his story," said Evans.

2
R068

D A

PM-PLOT 4-12

12 Apr 77

(orig
under
King)

King, Martin Luther
CIA 8 House Assass. Ctte

Billett, Myron

COLUMBUS, OHIO (UPI) -- FEDERAL AUTHORITIES PLAN TO INVESTIGATE AN OHIO PENITENTIARY INMATE'S CLAIM THAT FBI AND CIA AGENTS OFFERED A NEW YORK UNDERWORLD FIGURE A \$1 MILLION CONTRACT IN 1968 TO KILL MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., IT WAS REPORTED TODAY.

SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPERS, IN A COPYRIGHTED ARTICLE BY WILLIAM PILLAR, SAID ED EVANS, CHIEF INVESTIGATOR FOR THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS IN WASHINGTON, WILL QUESTION MYRON BILLETT, 52, IN CONNECTION WITH HIS ALLEGATIONS.

BILLETT, ALIAS PAUL BUCCILLI, TOLD SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPERS HE SET UP A SECRET MEETING IN JANUARY 1968 AT A HIDEAWAY MOTEL IN APPALACHIN, N.Y., BETWEEN THE AGENTS AND THE LATE CARLOS GAMBINO, WHO REPORTEDLY HEADED ONE OF FIVE NEW YORK CRIME FAMILIES.

BILLETT, WHO ALSO CLAIMS TO BE A FORMER UNDERCOVER AGENT FOR THE FBI, SAID HE WAS TOLD THE OFFER TO KILL KING CAME FROM WASHINGTON AND WAS APPROVED BY THE LATE FBI DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER.

BILLETT SAID GAMBINO, HOWEVER, REJECTED THE CONTRACT AND LATER PASSED THE WORD FROM NEW YORK CITY THAT NONE OF THE CRIME FAMILIES, WITH WHICH HE WAS ASSOCIATED, WOULD ACCEPT THE OFFER TO KILL KING.

BILLETT SAID HE SENT A LETTER MARCH 27 TO HOUSE SPEAKER THOMAS O'NEILL, STATING HE WANTED TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS. O'NEILL'S OFFICE SAID THEY HAVE NOT LOCATED THE LETTER.

REP. LOUIS STOKES, D-CLEVELAND, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE ASSASSINATIONS COMMITTEE SAID HE ORDERED EVANS TO INVESTIGATE THE ALLEGATIONS RAISED BY BILLETT AFTER SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPERS ASKED STOKES IF THE LETTER HAD BEEN TURNED OVER TO HIM.

EVANS SAID HE PERSONALLY IS CHECKING THE MOUNTAIN OF MAIL RECEIVED DAILY BY O'NEILL, AND THAT "WE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH BILLETT TO CHECK OUT HIS STORY."

BILLETT, IN AN EARLIER LETTER TO SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPERS, SAID HE WANTED TELL HIS STORY TO CONGRESSIONAL PROBERS NOW THAT OTHERS ARE ALLEGING CONSPIRACIES EXISTED IN THE ASSASSINATION OF KING IN 1968 AND PRESIDENT JOHN J. KENNEDY IN 1963.

94-2738

Public Understanding Of CIA Called Crucial

By BOB ROBERTSON
Staff Writer

The deputy director of the CIA said in an interview here Saturday he is certain the agency had no part in the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King.

"I cannot imagine the agency being in any way involved in either of these unfortunate events," commented E. Henry Knoche, who has held the No. 2 post since his appointment by President Ford last April.

Knoche, a 1947 graduate of Washington and Jefferson College where he was a standout basketball player, said his opinion is based on an association with agency dating back to 1953.

His comments were in response to a question asking

for his assessment of the House Select Committee reopening the investigation of the slayings.

Knoche said the CIA had made full disclosures to the Warren Commission which probed the Kennedy assassination and would cooperate with the new investigation.

"I am not sure anyone will ever construct the precise facts, however," Knoche said of the Kennedy case.

Proving negatives, that the CIA was not involved; that the FBI was not involved, or that Cuba was not involved, is almost impossible, he said.

Knoche was asked about the effect of public disclosures on the CIA.

"One positive effect has been that it has made the subject of intelligence public

and demonstrates how it can fit into a constitutional framework."

With the new guidelines imposed by executive order, the agency has improved oversight from the Congress, the executive branch of government and the public, he said.

The understanding of the public is crucial, Knoche said, and his appearance here demonstrates that the agency feels it must be accountable to the public.

The image of intelligence as projected by James Bond's "007" and the "Get Smart" television program has been "all shoot'em up, violence and reprisal," according to Knoche.

Despite its apparent change in philosophy, Knoche said, "Secrets are vital to our

business."

Why the need for secrecy?

"To protect our sources and because of certain state affairs such as battle plans for a war or foreign troubles," he said.

Knoche labeled as "absurdities" charges that the CIA maintains such great secrecy because it does not want bad publicity or that it wants to "keep people in the dark."

As for electronic eavesdropping, Knoche admitted it is a "difficult area." He also acknowledged it is a legitimate concern of the public.

"I assure you there is wisdom in the process by which it is handled," he began, and added, "we are

continued

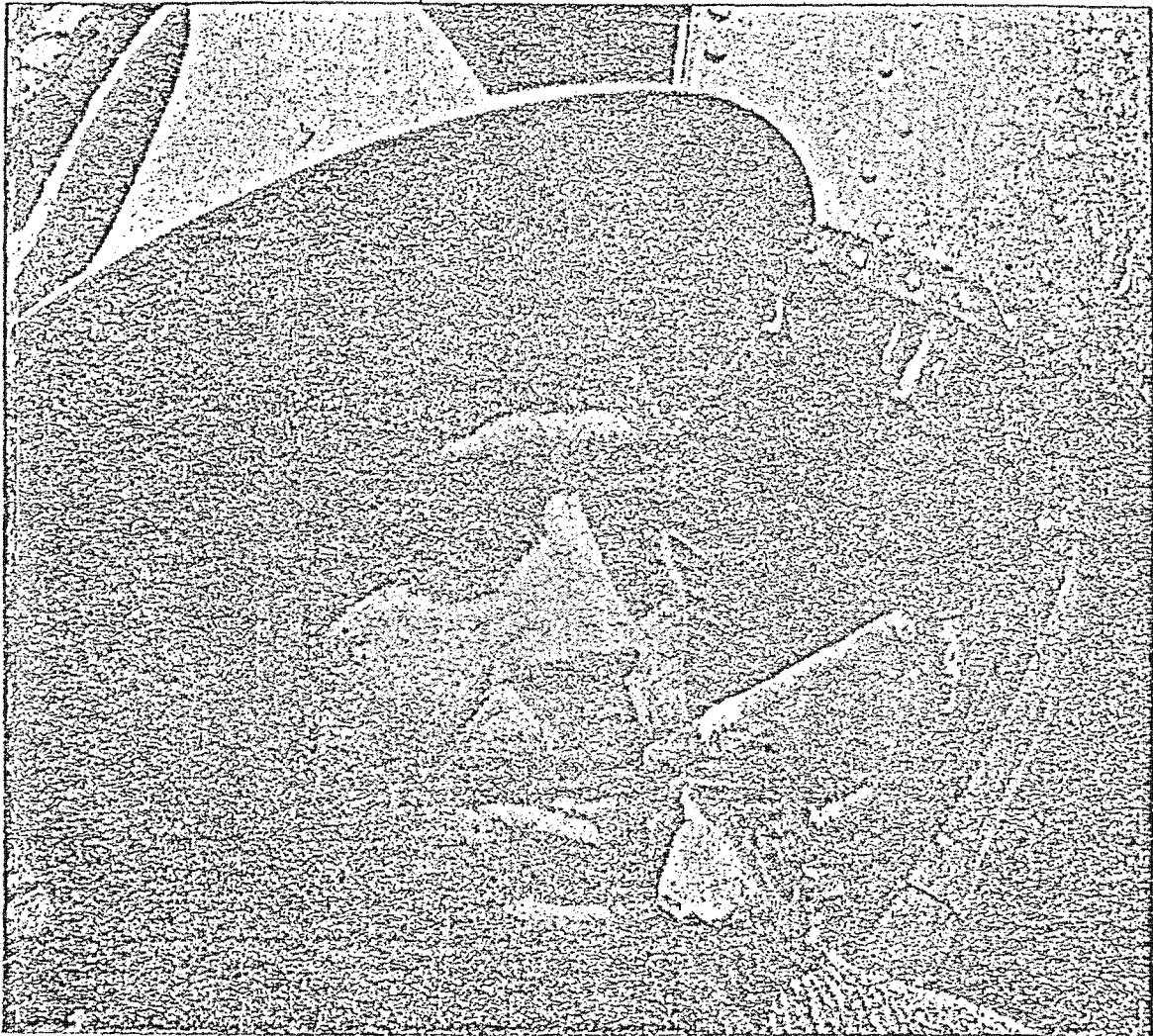
Kennedy, John F.
King, Martin Luther
(orig under Knoche)

THE VILLAGE VOICE
19 January 1976

F-Russell, Dick
Youngblood, Jack
King, Martin Luther
King, Jr.
Russell

Does This Man Know Who Conspired to Assassinate King?

'A number of strange characters and stranger tales have surfaced amid the recent assassination conspiracy revival. The story of Jack Youngblood is the strangest of all.'



Jack Youngblood was one of the U. S. military's promising young men in the early 1950s. In 1961, with Robin Moore, he wrote a book (this photograph is from the jacket) about his adventures as a flying gunrunner in Cuba and Latin America. Some feel he's a faker. James Earl Ray's lawyer thinks he's a hitman.

Conspiracy Killed King, Widow Says

By Andrew Torchia
Associated Press

NAIROBI, Nov. 27—The widow of Martin Luther King said today that his assassination apparently was caused by a government conspiracy and that investigations into his slaying should be reopened.

"I don't have the facts, but at this stage I say it appears there was a conspiracy in the death of my husband," Coretta King said.

"The way he was documented and followed around by Hoover and the CIA when he was abroad, it would have to have been attached to the forces of our government that felt he was a threat to the system as it existed," Mrs. King said.

She referred to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and to the late Federal Bureau of Investigation chief, J. Edgar Hoover.

Mrs. King, on a three-nation African tour, arrived here Wednesday. She was interviewed before a meeting with Kenyan women leaders arranged by the U.S. Information Service.

She commented on the review ordered by Atty. Gen. Edward Levi of the FBI investigation of the King's shooting death in 1968. James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to the killing in Memphis, Tenn., and was sentenced to 99 years in prison.

The FBI has acknowledged that it undertook a harassment campaign to discredit King but has concluded that Ray acted alone in King's assassination. Levi ordered a review of the investigation of King's death in light of the harassment campaign but said he still believes that the investigation was thorough.

The widow was also asked to

comment on President Ford's statement at a news conference Wednesday that he abhorred FBI harassment of King and that he would consult Levi on taking action against those to blame.

"I am very encouraged by this. I do feel with the recent investigations into the FBI and CIA we have new evidence, confirmed evidence," she said.

"I feel it requires further investigation into the death of my husband, as well as the assassinations of others from the Kennedys on.

"I think there are grounds for reopening the case. I have always felt there was more to it than came out. I also felt somehow in the long run of history it would be revealed—just what did happen," she said.

Mrs. King told the Kenyan women Hoover tried to discredit her husband by alleging he stole some money, sought self-glorification and was sexually immoral.

The last accusation was "an effort to get me upset and turn me against him," she said. "I was never affected, because I knew his moral commitments."

"From the grave the truth has risen," Mrs. King added. "High officials now know it was Hoover and not Martin Luther King who was immoral and unjust."

P-Torchia, Andrew
King, Martin L.

Mrs. King Sees FBI Link in Death

From Inquirer Wire Services

NAIROBI, Kenya — The widow of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said yesterday that his assassination apparently was linked to government harassment and that investigations into his slaying should be reopened.

"The way he was documented and followed around by (the late FBI Director J. Edgar) Hoover and the CIA when he was abroad," Coretta King, "it would have to have been attached to the forces of our government that felt he was a threat to the system as it existed."

Mrs. King, who's on a three-nation African tour, arrived in Nairobi on

Wednesday.

Mrs. King commented on the review that has been ordered by Attorney General Edward H. Levi of the FBI investigation of Dr. King's shooting in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968. James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to the killing and was sentenced to 99 years in prison.

The widow was also asked to comment on President Ford's statement at a news conference Wednesday that he abhorred FBI harassment of Dr. King and that he would consult Levi on taking action against those who were to blame.

"I am very encouraged by this. I do feel with the recent investigations into the FBI and CIA we have new evidence, confirmed evidence," she said.

Also yesterday, civil rights leaders Dick Gregory, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and Georgia state legislator Hosca Williams led a small group of supporters in picketing the White House after sending a telegram to Ford calling for a new investigation into Dr. King's death.

They also urged Ford "in the spirit of Thanksgiving" to ask Dr. King's family to the White House to apologize for the FBI harassment.

2 Know of King Plot, Rights Leaders Say

From News Services

A trio of prominent civil rights activists say two men now in jail can testify that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in a conspiracy and not single-handedly by James Earl Ray.

The Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Dick Gregory and Georgia state legislator Hosea Williams led a small demonstration at the White House yesterday to back their telegraphed plea to President Ford to reopen the investigation of King's death in 1968.

Atty. Gen. Edward Levi said Wednesday he had ordered a review of the FBI file on the King assassination to determine whether it should be reopened.

FORD HIMSELF has suggested an investigation of "new developments" in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy as well as an inquiry into the FBI harassment of King.

And King's widow, Coretta King, said yesterday in Nairobi, Kenya, where she is attending a meeting of Kenyan women leaders arranged by the U.S. Information Service, she agrees that a new investigation should be made of her husband's assassination — that apparently there had been a conspiracy.

And in Chicago, the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson called for

a new trial for Ray and a congressional or Warren Commission-type investigation into the King assassination, saying the Justice Department's decision to review the assassination in light of the Senate Intelligence Committee's revelations about FBI activities against King would amount to only a "self-investigation."

THE TRIO in Washington, in their telegram to Ford, said any investigation should include evidence from Robert Byron Watson, who allegedly overheard a plot to assassinate King.

They also said a C.H. Andrews, also known as R.L. Warren, would be willing to testify as to his alleged part in the plot against King if he were granted immunity from prosecution.

They said Watson is in a federal prison at Ashland, Ky., and Andrews is in the Mimico Correctional Institute in Toronto, Ont.

They gave no details of testimony either Andrews or Watson could offer.

THEY ALSO urged Ford "in the spirit of Thanksgiving" to ask King's family to the White House to apologize for FBI harassment. In his news conference



—United Press International

Civil rights leaders picketed the White House yesterday in an effort to have the investigation of Martin Luther King's slaying reopened. Carrying signs are (from left) Dick Gregory, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy and Josea Williams. The man at the far left is unidentified.

Wednesday, Ford said he abhorred the FBI's attempts to discredit King and that he thought those responsible should be brought to justice.

Mrs. King, in the Nairobi interview, said: "I don't have the facts, but at this stage I say it appears there

was a conspiracy in the death of my husband."

She added: "The way he was documented and followed around by Hoover and the CIA when he was abroad, it would have to have been attached to the forces of our government that felt he was a threat to the system as it existed."

22 NOV 1975

Jackson, Jesse
King, Martin Luth**Jackson asks revival
of King death probe**

New York (AP)—A former associate of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., called yesterday for a reopening of the public investigation into the 1968 assassination of the civil rights leader, citing possible FBI and CIA involvement.

The Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, president of the Chicago-based People United to Save Humanity (PUSH), also called for new investigations into the slayings of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy and Malcolm X, a black leader.

Speaking at a news conference at the Amsterdam News, Dr. Jackson referred to the recent disclosure before the Senate intelligence committee of a letter sent by the FBI to Dr. King, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, shortly before he was to receive the Nobel peace prize.

Dr. Jackson conceded that the evidence was circumstantial but said the letter, which was interpreted as suggesting that Dr. King commit suicide within 34 days or face public exposure and embarrassment, implicated the intelligence agencies.

C.I.A. MEN OPENED 3 SENATORS' MAIL AND NOTE TO NIXON

Panel Says Aides Inspected
Correspondence of U.S.
Citizens for 20 Years

'BIG' PHOTOGRAPHIC FILE

Committee Agrees to Ask
Ex-President If He Knew
of Intercept Program

By JOHN M. CREWDSON
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24 —

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence disclosed today that over a 20-year period ending in 1973, the Central Intelligence Agency opened foreign correspondence to and from prominent Americans, including Richard M. Nixon and Senators Hubert H. Humphrey, Edward M. Kennedy and Frank Church.

Senator Church, the Idaho Democrat who is the committee's chairman, described a C.I.A. file of photographic copies of inspected mail as "big" but said that in the case of Mr. Nixon, Mr. Humphrey and himself, only one letter each had been involved.

The letters were apparently intercepted during the C.I.A.'s routine surveillance of mail to and from the Soviet Union, China and Cuba. In that operation, millions of pieces of mail were intercepted, but not necessarily opened and photographed, the Rockefeller commission reported earlier this year.

Criteria Not Known

Criteria used by the C.I.A. in deciding whether to open a particular letter have never been made public. Senator Church said today, however, that the names of none of the 12 individuals and institutions whose mail had been found in the C.I.A.'s files had appeared on the agency's "watch list,"

an index of names that were to be given special attention.

Mr. Church announced that the panel had agreed unanimously at a closed session of the committee that it would ask Mr. Nixon for his testimony on a number of related matters, for example whether he had been made aware while in office of the C.I.A.'s mail-intercept program.

The committee authorized its counsel, F. A. O. Schwartz 3d, to begin "negotiations" with Mr. Nixon's lawyer, Herbert J. Miller, on the time and place of the former President's appearance.

The C.I.A.'s surveillance of mail to and from American citizens, which took place at

various times in New York, San Francisco, New Orleans and Honolulu, has been investigated by other Congressional committees and by President Ford's commission on domestic C.I.A. activities.

But today's announcement by Mr. Church, during the public portion of the committee's hearing, was the first disclosure that the agency had opened, read and maintained in a special file photographic copies of overseas mail sent or received by prominent American political figures.

The file, which Mr. Church termed "big," was later described by a committee aide as having contained "correspondence to and from selected American politicians."

In addition, the Church committee's staff found copies in other C.I.A. files, of intercepted mail that had been sent or received by Dr. Arthur F. Burns, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board; the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the late civil rights leader, and his wife, Coretta; John D. Rockefeller 4th, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations and Harvard University.

The incident concerning Mr. Nixon, Senator Church said, involved a single letter mailed to him in June, 1968, when Mr. Nixon was the leading candidate for the Republican Presidential nomination, by an aide traveling in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Church said that the author of the letter, Raymond K. Price Jr., who later served as a speech writer in the Nixon White House, discussed among other things the candidate's

chances of gaining the nomination and a Presidential victory the following November.

In some instances, Mr. Church said, the C.I.A.'s files disclosed only one letter or a few to or from prominent politicians and other public figures, but in others the surveillance appeared to have been more extensive.

He said that his committee had ferreted out new information on the scope of the mail intercept program that would be made public soon, but he agreed to provide a few additional details about today's disclosure.

Other Letters Found

The C.I.A. files also yielded, according to Mr. Church, a letter mailed in 1958 by Mr. Humphrey, a Minnesota Democrat, from the Soviet Union to someone in the United States and a number of letters to Mr. Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat, from "peace groups abroad."

In his own case, Mr. Church said, the C.I.A. had seized a letter that he had sent from Moscow in 1971 to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Chase A. Clark of Boise, Idaho.

None of the individuals or institutions named today, Mr. Church said, have been found on the C.I.A.'s index, called the "watch list," of individuals whose correspondence was to be given especially close attention.

That list did include, however, such names as those of Linus Pauling, the chemist and Nobel laureate; John Steinbeck, the author, and Victor Reuther, brother of the late labor leader Walter Reuther.

Today's witness before the Senate committee was James J. Angleton, a 57-year-old retired C.I.A. official who served for 20 years as the chief of its counterintelligence section and was responsible during that time for the mail-intercept operation.

Mr. Angleton conceded under questioning by committee members that the operation, known in C.I.A. nomenclature as HT Lingual, had been undertaken in direct violation of Federal statutes that prohibit any tampering with first-class mail.

C.I.A. operations are typically described by a code phrase made up of a two-letter prefix designating a certain country, geographic region or internal C.I.A. division, followed by a meaningless code word. The agency's project involving the storing of various poisons, which the Church committee disclosed last week, was termed, NK Naomi, for example.

As far as is known, the C.I.A. intercepted only letters between the United States and the Soviet Union, China and Cuba, which were made available to it at postal sorting facilities in the four cities where the operation was centered.

The intercept of mail to and from the Soviet Union occurred over the entire 20-year period of the operation at Kennedy International Airport in Queens. The three other operations were of shorter and intermittent duration.

The letters intercepted by the agency to and from Mr. Nixon and the other individuals and institutions mentioned today by Mr. Church apparently occurred in the course of the agency's normal surveillance of such traffic.

Mr. Angleton declined to say in public today just what the "watch list" comprised, or how the names of Dr. Pauling, Mr. Steinbeck and Mr. Reuther came to be on it.

Mr. Angleton, an intense, silver-haired man who was known to his C.I.A. colleagues as "Mother," nevertheless defended, despite his admission of its illegality, the effectiveness of the HT Lingual operation.

(Orig under Gen
CIA 64 Angleton, James

continued

CIA 8 Senate Select
Cts

CIA 3.01.76

Nixon, Richard

Kennedy, Edward

Church, Frank

Humphrey, Hubert

CIA 4 8 USSR

China

Cuba

Burns, Arthur

King, Martin L

Rockefeller, John D

Org 1 Ford Found

Rockefeller

HARVARD Univ

CIA 4.01 "Watch List"

Whoever gave Centennial Boulevard its name must have done so with his tongue in his cheek. It is a long and dusty street, lined with squat, unattractive houses and without a tree in sight, leading from the centre of Nashville, the state capital of Tennessee, to the outskirts. Eventually the residential section gives way to factory blocks, warehouses and railway sidings, and towards the end of the road one comes to a vacant expanse at the edge of which stands a plywood board announcing that anyone venturing beyond this point is liable to be searched.

Registering the fact, I nevertheless turned into the waste lot and drove another 300 metres or so to an iron grill fence surrounding a fortress-like building with ridged roof and narrow slits of windows. Outward from the five-storey structure extended high brick walls topped by electrified barbed wire and guard towers with searchlights. This was the prison where James Ray, the man convicted for the murder of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, has been held for six years now.

Behind the Bars

There had just been a sensational prison break — several dangerous criminals had escaped from the penitentiary where Ray is one of more than 2,000 convicts — and the local paper carried the warden's assurances that this would not be allowed to happen again, and in

The arrest of James Ray (alias Eric Galt) was only a matter of time.

Reprinted from "Newsweek" (U.S.A.)



25,75 "NEW TIMES"

THE MYSTERY OF THE MEMPHIS KILLING

From Our Own Correspondent

IONA ANDRONOV

particular that there was no chance of Ray escaping. Several U.S. newsmen had been permitted to visit the prison and this gave me the idea of doing likewise.

I presented my press card at the main gate and asked to see the warden. Evidently not quite clear as to who I was, the guard on duty asked:

"Where are you from?"

"New York."

"Well, if you've come that far, I'll find out."

He called up someone, then signed to one of his subordinates, who stepped behind me and told me to raise my hands. I did so. After I had been thoroughly frisked, the frisker was put through the same procedure. His gun was taken from him and he was told to take me in. "Why'd you search him?" I asked the man in charge. "We don't want any guns to get inside," he replied, and added: "I'd advise you not to ask too many questions."

My escort took me into the administrative block and the warden's office. Warden Jim Rose was somewhat taken aback when he discovered that his unexpected visitor was a foreigner, and a "Red" to boot, but he agreed to give me some of his time. I asked him about Ray, but he had little to tell me. He was in solitary, the warden said, and was not allowed visitors. Newsmen were definitely out. Outwardly he was in full possession of his faculties, but he was secretive and obviously up to something. He had made two attempts to escape. Now he was being constantly watched. Were they afraid he'd run away? The warden shuddered at the thought. "Could I see the inside of the prison, as other newsmen have?" I asked.

"Well, if you insist," Rose said after a moment's hesitation. "Ours is a model prison, by the way, as you will see for yourself. We can show you our improved electric chair, if you like."

He pressed a button and a burly guard entered.

"Show this gentleman around the place and see that they let him out again," the warden said with a straight face.

We walked down a corridor and soon came to a steel door over which a television camera mounted on a swivel bracket silently turned its eye on us. The door slid into the wall to let us through, then closed behind us and we found ourselves facing an iron grating that reached from floor to ceiling. In this mousetrap three TV cameras inspected us. When the green glow in their lenses finally went out, the grating opened and beyond it stood another guard who searched us again. From here we entered the prison yard where I saw some of the inmates.

I can still see those faces — closed, mask-like, seemingly indifferent to everything about them. Identical blue overalls, the same expressionless eyes.

"These fellas aren't considered dangerous," my escort said.

From the yard we entered the concrete block where the most dangerous criminals were held. Another guard post at the entrance, another maze of corridors, then a room with steel netting instead of a roof.

"This is where they get their exercise," the guard said. "The net's to prevent escape."

"Where is Ray?"

"He's in this block. I can show you one of the neighbouring cells. Exactly like Ray's."

It was a solitary cell. A steel door with a barred window. A dim electric bulb feebly lit the interior of the concrete coffin slightly more than the height of a man in length and about a metre and a half wide. A narrow bunk against one wall, on it

27

(Moscow)

King, MARTIN Luther
CIA 4.01 ASSASSINATION
(orig under King)

the motionless shape of a prisoner. Silence. Dead silence. Ray was sentenced to 99 years of this.

"Is it true that Ray went on hunger strike in protest?"

"Yes."

"The paper said he was beaten, is that true?"

"I don't know anything about that. Come on, I'll show you our electric chair like the boss said."

"No thanks, I've had enough."

The Trap

Three months ago a Tennessee federal district court judge turned down James Ray's application for a retrial. For years now Ray has been trying from his prison cell to convince the authorities that it was not he who killed Martin Luther King, that he had been only indirectly and unwittingly involved in the crime.

Ray has named the men who plotted the crime, described their appearance, given their addresses at the time of the murder and even their telephone numbers. But year after year the authorities have turned a deaf ear to his appeals, although he has not yet asked to be released but only for another trial in order to establish the truth.

"Ray's case was a sham and a farce from the very beginning," said Ray's counsel Bernard Fensterwald, a well-known lawyer, when I saw him in his impressive Washington law office whose windows afford a view of the White House. James Lesar, Ray's other lawyer, who has been working on the case with Fensterwald for more than four years, was present at the interview.

"It was not Ray who shot King," Lesar said. "True enough, Ray was at the scene of the crime, but on that fatal day of April 4, 1968, he had been lured there by the real killers so as to make him the scapegoat and cover up their own traces. Six months after his arrest he was brought to trial. The whole thing took no more than a few minutes, there was no examination of the evidence, no hearing of arguments. Sentence was pronounced at once. Actually there was no trial. Ray was the victim of what we call a legal lynching."

Last autumn Ray's lawyers and a Tennessee colleague of theirs named Robert Livingston succeeded after



According to the police version, the fatal shot was fired from the third window from the left on the top floor. But ballistics experts say this was impossible.

many months of legal argument with the authorities in getting a hearing of the cases for the prosecution and the defence — for the first time, six years after the assassination of Dr. King. And it turned out that there was no proof whatever of Ray's guilt. Incredible? Yet a fact.

The only witness for the prosecution, who allegedly saw Ray running away after the shooting of Dr. King, was exposed as a liar. Moreover, as a hopeless drunk who at the time of the assassination had been seen lying in a drunken stupor. When he came to, he had been given a sum of money by the police to give false evidence.

The police too slipped up on things. The principal evidence they produced was a rifle with Ray's fingerprints. But to this day the police experts have not been able to prove that the bullets that killed King were fired from that particular rifle.

One ballistics expert testified under oath that Ray could not have ambushed his supposed victim from the premises from which the police claimed the shots had been fired because the partition wall in the room came so close to the window

that it would have been impossible to have aimed a rifle at the spot where King had stood.

"I personally have long been in no doubt whatever that Ray was not the killer," Lesar said. "He was only a petty lawbreaker who fell into a trap laid by experienced murderers. Ray is cowardly by nature and steers clear of violence. He admitted to me that he had previously engaged in thievery, had been caught several times but had managed to get away, had hidden from the authorities, and had always been short of money. And so it was until the day he met a mysterious individual named Raoul, who promised him false identity papers and \$12,000 plus expenses if he would do what he was told to do without asking any questions. Ray agreed."

In New Orleans he was introduced to two other shady characters after which Ray's new boss told him to buy a rifle with telescopic sights and take it to Memphis. In Memphis he again met with his new boss, who took the rifle from him and told him to take a room in a hotel he indicated and wait for further instructions in a neighbouring bar. It was while sitting in that bar over a glass of beer that Ray heard that Dr. Martin Luther King had been shot on the balcony of another nearby hotel and that the police were already scouring the neighbourhood. Ray, badly frightened, hastened to get out of town. But the rifle with Ray's fingerprints, left in full view near the scene of the crime, had been found, and since Ray's prints were on file with the FBI, his arrest was only a matter of time.

"We came to the conclusion that it was not by chance that Ray — like Lee Harvey Oswald, the alleged killer of President Kennedy, before him — was approached by plotters in New Orleans," Fensterwald added. "The revelations made on this score by the former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison are common knowledge. I too had a direct hand in the investigation of the circumstances of President Kennedy's assassination and I can assure you that the official version of this tragedy is more than questionable. The circumstances of Dr. King's death were similarly falsified. And the truth must be established not only for the sake of the record. The murder of national political leaders is becoming a practice in our country, with the organizers of as-

sassinations going scot-free. They are apt to try again. That is why we have not given up efforts to track them down and establish the truth, however grim it may turn out to be. It is being concealed but the American people want to know the truth."

I asked the Washington lawyers whether they had documentary evidence to prove their case. They gave me a thick folder of documents.

Halfway to the Solution

Among the documents were Ray's detailed confession written recently in prison and the testimony of his sister and two brothers, each duly signed and the signatures certified by a notary public. And each document confirmed that the mystery of the murder of Martin Luther King still remains to be unravelled.

In his confession, Ray tells how after his arrest and up to the sentence, he had had two court-appointed lawyers whom he had feared more than anything else because "they conveyed to the FBI all the information I gave them." One of them, Arthur Hanes, had not concealed that he had worked for the FBI and later for the CIA. The other, Percy Foreman, had personal connections with the then FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, who had publicly declared that Ray was a lone killer, and that there had been no conspiracy against King. Ray says that he wanted to testify to the contrary at the trial. But his counsel "claimed that if I stood trial I would

receive the electric chair and I would be barbecued."

When Ray insisted, Foreman told him point-blank that false witnesses had already been hired to testify against him, and that if this didn't work, Ray says, "Foreman said that he would deliberately destroy the case in the courtroom."

Foreman also went to see Ray's relatives. According to his brother Jerry Ray, Foreman stated: "If you care about your brother at all, you'll go down and ask him to plead guilty." His other brother, John, adds: "Foreman said he couldn't get it through Jimmy's head to get conspiracy out of his head."

Ray's sister Carol writes: "Foreman told us he knew that James did not kill Dr. King but that it didn't matter whether or not James was guilty. Foreman also said that the prosecution was bribing witnesses. He said the type of jurors that would be on the jury would be the type that would vote to convict James. He also told us that if James would co-operate and keep his mouth shut, Foreman would get him a pardon in a matter of about two years. When Foreman left our house, my father said: 'He sold James out.'"

In the meantime, Ray's nerves had given way and he implicated himself. And although only two weeks after the sentence was handed down he again began to insist on his innocence and ask for a new hearing, the case was closed and remains closed to this day. Somebody evidently wants it that way.

In his confession Ray regrets that

during the investigation he kept silent out of fear. Once "they showed me some photographs of some white males which were taken at the scene the day President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas... I was asked if I would identify the man if he was brought to Memphis. I said, no, although he did look similar to the party I was involved with." The reference was to the man Raoul who had organized the crime in Memphis.

Ray's present lawyers showed me pictures of two men. One was a photograph of a young man who had been arrested in Dallas on suspicion of being involved in the assassination of the President, but who was soon released and disappeared without trace. The other was a dummy reconstructed by the Memphis police of King's assassin based on descriptions by eyewitnesses in the first few hours after the killing, when the hunt for James Ray was not yet on. Neither picture bears any resemblance to Ray, but the Dallas and Memphis suspects could be twins.

The mystery man from Dallas and Memphis whom Ray has now identified was formerly associated, according to the "New York Times," with the sabotage and subversive operations that used to be conducted from U.S. territory against Cuba. The New Orleans conspirators who recruited Ray had been involved in the same sort of activities, Ray had told Lesar. In his confession too Ray says that the photos shown him of the Dallas suspects were of "men who were associated with anti-Communist Cubans." It is common knowledge that this kind of activity was at that time encouraged in every way and headed by U.S. secret services. The threads led to the CIA.

Ray, in prison, dictated the following statement to his brother Jerry, who had been permitted to see him:

"I knew nothing about King being in Memphis until after King had been killed. I could not argue with the Federal agents I worked for because they would have put me in prison if I failed to take orders from them. They told me I was helping them to supply arms and guns to Cuban refugees to overthrow Castro and the Communists in Cuba. The Federal agents led me to believe that I was in Memphis for the same purpose. I know that the Federal agents merely used me to be the fall guy when they killed King."

The motel balcony where King was killed.

Reprinted from "Time" magazine (U.S.A.)



Ray's brother says that Ray was referring to CIA agents.

"Why the CIA?" Gerald Frank, a prominent American publicist, asks in his detailed study of the documents relating to the assassination of Martin Luther King. "The Central Intelligence Agency might be behind it. It had been publicly charged that Dr. King had associated with Communists. Dr. King and his associates had vehemently denied it. But if it were true, if it were Communist sympathies that led Dr. King to attack the Vietnam war, and if he were to use his great influence to persuade Black soldiers, the mainstay of our army in Vietnam, not to fight; if, with his international stature as a Nobel Prize winner, he were to travel abroad to denounce the United States as a militaristic and racist nation, it could be argued that he was so potentially dangerous that his permanent silencing was a strategic and a national necessity."

A debatable hypothesis? Perhaps. But it is one towards which more and more Americans are inclining as they follow the investigation of CIA activity now under way in Washington (See "New Times" No. 24).

According to the "New York Post," the Administration committee investigating CIA activity summoned the leading espionage expert Frank

Sturgis and for two days interrogated him about his involvement in the Kennedy and King assassinations. The fact speaks for itself.

In April, 26 Congressmen put before Congress a resolution calling for the reopening of the King and Kennedy murder investigations. The move was supported by Jesse Jackson, a prominent Black leader, who accused CIA agents of the murder of Dr. King. "James Ray said that he didn't act alone and I believe him," he said.

In the meantime, Ray, doomed to silence in prison and tormented by fear of secret vengeance, nevertheless had the courage to send this message to the outside world through his brother:

"He told me personally," the press quotes Jerry Ray as saying, "that if he did not win an appeal, he would reveal the names. There seems to be a lot of people who don't want his story to get out, but they are not going to hush him up."

The appeal Ray's defence counsel have filed with higher courts has not yet been heard, and it is too early to predict the outcome. But whatever the results, all America is already outraged by the CIA murder plots that have been brought out into the light of day.

New York

TAKING UP A POINT

Every now and then one hears people arguing about the practical usefulness of scientific research. In the heat of the debate some maintain that spending on research, and in particular on space research, should be cut on the plea that the funds thus released would yield quick results in terms of accelerated improvement of the living standard. Could you throw some light on this question!

A. VETUKH

Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Our staff
writer

VLADIMIR
ZHITOMIRSKY

replies:



There regrettably are of course some who entertain notions of the kind you speak of. And in a way one can understand them. For improving the living standard of the Soviet people is indeed one of the cardinal tasks set by our Party in the current five-year period. Their trouble is that they still subscribe to the old fallacy that scientists are divorced from the practical realities, from the day-to-day needs of the economy, and have not paid due attention to data published in the press on economic returns from scientific research.

At first glance the idea of channeling large sums from spending on science to building dwelling houses, cinemas and the like and raising wages seems attractive.

But only at first glance. The fact remains that we are living in the age of the scientific and technological revolution when there can be no progress in any branch of the economy without expanding research and speeding up the application of research findings in practical life. The "quick results" you refer to would very soon put the brakes on production and lead to economic stagnation.

M.K.

The U.S. Diego Garcia Base

Speaking at a hearing of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee on June 10, Secretary of Defence James R. Schlesinger cited certain facts and figures concerning the planned extension of the U.S. naval base on Diego Garcia Island. The object of the modernization is to improve supply of materiel to the U.S. armed forces in the Indian Ocean zone.

He said that, according to Pentagon plans, "the runway would be lengthened to 12,000 feet from its present 8,000 feet to permit the operation of larger cargo aircraft as well as high

performance tactical aircraft." It is also proposed to increase more than 10-fold the capacity of the naval and aircraft fuel stores, build an anchorage for a tactical aircraft-carrier force, etc.

In support of his appeal for appropriations, Schlesinger stated that the Indian Ocean is "an area which has become increasingly important over the past decade," adding that "over the past year, we have had an augmented presence in the area approximately one-third of the time."

JACKSON, Jesse
King, MARTIN LUTHER

Probe of Dr. King's Death Urged

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—A national civil rights leader yesterday called for a new investigation of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., declaring that he believes the FBI and the CIA played a role in King's death.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, national director of People United to Save Humanity, also urged an investigation of whether there was a link between King's death and the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy in 1963 and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy about two months after King's slaying in 1968.

"With the revelations of Watergate and the exposure of the role of the CIA and FBI in affecting the policy of government, the bugging and the spying, there is considerable evidence now that we have a valid case," Jackson said.

"I BELIEVE the FBI and the CIA was involved in some way or another with the assassination of Dr. King," he said.

Jackson was on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel talking with King when the civil rights leader

was slain April 4, 1968, in Memphis.

He led about 3,000 marchers through downtown Memphis yesterday to commemorate the seventh anniversary of King's death.

James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to King's slaying, but now claims his plea was coerced by his attorneys. A federal judge recently rejected Ray's petition to withdraw his plea and stand trial.

RAY "SAID HE did not do it alone and he wants the case reopened," Jackson

said. "We agree. We do not believe he did it alone. What was the relationship of the government — the CIA and the FBI?"

He said he would appeal immediately to Atty. Gen. Edward H. Levi to reopen then investigation.

In Atlanta, King's widow and about 25 other friends and family members gathered despite chilling, blustery winds to place pink azaleas on the grave of King, founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and leader of the powerful civil rights movement of the 1960s.

CIA 4.01 ASSASSINATI

DR. KING BUGGING BY F.B.I. VERIFIED

Ex-Agent Told Watergate Panel That Check in '64 Was Done for Johnson

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26—

Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. said today that the Senate Watergate committee had obtained evidence that the Federal used electronic listening devices against the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

Appearing on the ABC television program "Issues and Answers," the Tennessee Republican said he had "sat in" on an interview between Watergate Committee investigators and Leo T. Clark, former agent in charge of the Atlantic City F.B.I. field office, in which Mr. Clark said the electronic surveillance of Dr. King had been conducted for President Johnson.

Sources on the now defunct Watergate committee said that Mr. Clark disclosed that the electronic surveillance of Dr. King had picked up Representatives, Senators and Robert F. Kennedy, then Attorney General, in their private conversations with the civil rights leader.

Not in 1972 Campaign

Mr. Baker said the content of the interview with Mr. Clark had not been made a part of the final Watergate report because "it was not involved in the '72 Presidential campaign."

Two former counsels on the Watergate committee said a memorandum on the Clark interview had been turned over to a Congressional committee. A spokesman for the F.B.I. said the bureau's current director, Clarence M. Kelley, expected to be questioned on the incident during Congressional hearings this week.

The Washington Post reported the Clark interview today. According to its account, Cartha D. DeLoach, then assistant to J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F.B.I., set up a special team of agents to conduct "technical surveillance" (F.B.I. jargon for wiretapping and bugging) and physical surveillance at the convention. The team was ordered by the Johnson White House, according to the article, and its stated purpose was to gather intelligence on potential violence or disruptions. Mr. Clark told the Senate investigators.

Arranged for Rooms

The Post gave these additional details:

Mr. Clark said he had arranged with the management of Atlantic City's Claridge Hotel to have Dr. King and his party stay in rooms 1901, 1902 and 1923.

He said he stayed in a room a floor below those held by Dr. King. He said the room was used to monitor transmissions of wiretaps and bugs from Dr. King's quarters and from 2414 Atlantic Avenue, a storefront used by the Congress of Racial Equality and other civil rights groups.

The conversations were monitored by F.B.I. agents and also tape recorded. The tape recordings were telephoned to Mr. DeLoach and other agents at a special control center. Mr. Clark said information pertinent to the security responsibilities of the Secret Service and the local police were passed onto those agencies.

"Clark recalls overhearing DeLoach speaking on the telephone to President Johnson and to Director Hoover, giving them summary information from the technical surveillance," the Watergate committee memorandum said.

Denied Talking to Johnson

Mr. DeLoach denied under oath in a 1973 Watergate committee interview that he had a direct line to President Johnson or spoke to him during the convention. Mr. DeLoach was not available for comment today.

In a DeLoach conversation with the President, the Watergate committee memorandum continued, according to the Post, "Clark heard mention of discussions concerning the seating of delegates or delegations," of Vice-Presidential candidate possibilities, and the identities of Congressmen and Senators going in and out of King's quarters."

Mr. Clark, who retired from the F.B.I. in 1965 after 22 years of service had left his New Jersey home for a Florida vacation and was not available for comment.

Senator Baker suggested that the newly-created Senate Select Committee on the Intelligence Community might subpoena documents from President Johnson's memorial library in an effort to set the record straight. He also did not rule out the issuing of a subpoena to former President Richard M. Nixon for other testimony.

Baker, Howard
CIA 7.02 FBI
King, Martin Luther
CIA 4.01 Domestic
Spying