

Mr. DeLoach

April 6, 1968

A. Rosen

1 - Mr. DeLoach

1 - Mr. Rosen

1 - Mr. Malley

MURKIN

1 - Mr. McGowan

① - Mr. McDonough

1 - Mr. Sullivan

1 - Mr. Bishop

1 - Mr. Mohr

1 - Mr. Callahan

In view of the numerous communications in connection with the case involving the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., in Memphis, Tennessee, on 4/4/68, it is felt that the code name MURKIN should be utilized in order to more efficiently handle the mail. This code word has been checked through the indices and there is no prior record of it having been utilized as a code name.

ACTION:

This code name will be utilized in all intra-Bureau communications relating to this specific case.

RJM:wjc
(10)

m-11

Mr. DeLoach

April 9, 1968

A. Rosen

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Bailey
1 - Mr. McGowan
① - Mr. Fortin
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Sullivan

There is attached a letterhead memorandum for the President, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division setting forth information developed to date. It is pointed out in the memorandum that Laboratory examination of the bullet removed from King has established that the bullet could have been fired from the rifle found near the scene, however, due to mutilation it cannot be stated that it was actually fired from this one rifle; investigation has determined that the rifle was obtained in the Birmingham area on 3/30/68 by an individual giving the name of Harvey Lowmeyer; and that the binoculars found in the zipper bag were purchased in Memphis, Tennessee, on the afternoon of 4/4/68.

The following details do not appear in the letterhead memorandum:

The individual using Room 5B at the flophouse had given the name of John Willard. Investigation has eliminated John Hubert Willard, FBI Number 934 454-C as being the individual who was at the flophouse inasmuch as his whereabouts have been accounted for during the pertinent period.

A check of all airlines, motels and hotels in the Birmingham area has determined that an individual using the name of W. J. Lowmeyer made telephonic reservation at Southern Airlines, Birmingham, for travel on 3/27/68 from Birmingham to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Lowmeyer never appeared for flight and gave places of contact as Parliament House and Airport Hotels, Birmingham. Investigation failed to locate Lowmeyer as guest. Records of Delta Airlines indicate that on 3/27/68 W. J. Lowmeyer purchased ticket for flight from Birmingham

Enclosure

CLW:ejc
(11)

CONTINUED - OVER

M-10a

Memorandum Rosen to DeLoach
Re: MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

enroute to Memphis then leaving Memphis enroute to Chicago and thereafter space on Northwest Airline from Chicago to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Airline personnel at Birmingham unable to say if Lehmeyer traveled to Minneapolis, but can state this individual did pass through gate for flight to Memphis. This matter being thoroughly checked out.

ACTION:

1. Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the White House, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division.

2. All-out investigation is continuing on a top priority basis.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

April 6, 1968

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Laboratory examination of the bullet removed from the body of Martin Luther King, Jr., has established that it is a .30 caliber metal jacketed soft point sporting type bullet of Remington-Peters manufacture. This bullet could have been fired from the rifle found on April 4, 1968, near the scene of the shooting by Guy Warren Canipe, Sr. Due to mutilation of the bullet, it cannot be stated that it was actually fired from this particular rifle.

It has been determined that the rifle was obtained in Birmingham, Alabama, on March 30, 1968. Employees of Aero Marine Supply Company in Birmingham have advised that an individual using the name of Harvey Lowmeyer purchased a caliber 243 W Remington rifle on March 29, 1968. He had a Redfield scope mounted on the rifle at this time. Lowmeyer indicated he planned to go to Wisconsin to hunt. The following day, March 30, 1968, Lowmeyer returned the rifle to the store and exchanged it for a Remington 760 Model .30-06 caliber. The scope was then mounted on the second rifle by the store. It appears that the name Lowmeyer is fictitious, as is the address given by him.

Extensive efforts are being made to identify the person who purchased the rifle.

The binoculars, which were in the zipper bag found by Canipe, were purchased during the afternoon of April 4, 1968, at York Arms, 162 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee.

The full investigation is continuing and every effort is being made to identify the individual or individuals responsible for this murder.

I am advised also that the Memphis Police Department is utilizing its full facilities to solve this crime.

Mr. DeLoach

April 6, 1968

A. Rosen

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. Martindale
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Sullivan

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The following details do not appear in the letterhead memorandum:

The individual using Room 5B at the flophouse had given the name of John Willard. Investigation has eliminated John Hubert Willard, FBI Number 934 454-C as being the individual who was at the flophouse inasmuch as his whereabouts have been accounted for during the pertinent period.

A check of all airlines, motels and hotels in the Birmingham area has determined that an individual using the name of W. J. Lehmeyer made telephonic reservation at Southern Airlines, Birmingham, for travel on 3/27/68 from Birmingham to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Lehmeyer never appeared for flight and gave places of contact as Parliament House and Airport Motels, Birmingham. Investigation failed to locate Lehmeyer as guest. Records of Delta Airlines indicate that on 3/27/68 W. J. Lehmeyer purchased ticket for flight from Birmingham

Enclosure

CLM:wjc
(11)

CONTINUED - OVER

Memorandum Rosen to DeLoach
Re: MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

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ACTION:

ACTION —
1. Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the White House, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division.

2. All-out investigation is continuing on a top priority basis.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

*In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.*

April 6, 1968

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It has been determined that the rifle was obtained in Birmingham, Alabama, on March 30, 1968. Employees of Aero Marine Supply Company in Birmingham have advised that an individual using the name of Harvey Lowmeyer purchased a caliber 243 W Remington rifle on March 29, 1968. He had a Redfield scope mounted on the rifle at this time. Lowmeyer indicated he planned to go to Wisconsin to hunt. The following day, March 30, 1968, Lowmeyer returned the rifle to the store and exchanged it for a Remington 760 Model .30-06 caliber. The scope was then mounted on the second rifle by the store. It appears that the name Lowmeyer is fictitious, as is the address given by him.

Extensive efforts are being made to identify the person who purchased the rifle.

The binoculars, which were in the zipper bag found by Canipe, were purchased during the afternoon of April 4, 1968, at York Arms, 162 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee.

The full investigation is continuing and every effort is being made to identify the individual or individuals responsible for this murder.

I am advised also that the Memphis Police Department is utilizing its full facilities to solve this crime.

4-5

1-Mr. Conrad-Enc.
1-Mr. Frazier-Enc.
1-Office, 7193-Enc.
4-5-68

Mr. Conrad

R. H. Jevons

UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
also known as John Willard;
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. -
VICTIM; CIVIL RIGHTS

Sixtyeight items were received from the Memphis Office today in connection with this case. They consisted of a bullet from the victim's body, a .30-06 Springfield caliber Remington "Camemaster" slide-action rifle, Model 760, Serial Number 401476, with a Redfield telescope sight attached, bearing Serial Number A17350, several loaded .30-06 caliber cartridges of both commercial and military types, a bedspread, a suitcase containing numerous toilet articles, maps, a newspaper section, a binocular, towel, handkerchief, a pair of socks, two cans of beer, purchased in Mississippi, and several miscellaneous items. In addition to the above, three twenty-dollar bills were submitted for fingerprint examination.

The bullet from King's body is a .30 caliber metal-jacketed, soft point, sporting type rifle bullet, similar in all remaining characteristics to the bullets in five of the loaded cartridges found in the suitcase referred to above. This suitcase was recovered by the Memphis Police Department after being abandoned in the vicinity of 424 South Main Street. A cartridge case found in this suitcase was identified as having been fired in the Remington rifle referred to above which was also abandoned at this address.

Based on general rifling impressions, the bullet from King's body could have been fired from the Remington rifle but due to mutilation of the bullet, insufficient marks of value for identification remain and it was not possible to determine definitely whether or not the fatal bullet came from this rifle. This conclusion was reached independently by three of the Laboratory's firearms examiners.

Enclosure

1-Mr. Tolson
1-Mr. Mohr
1-Mr. DeLoach
1-Mr. Rosen
1-Mr. Bishop
①-Mr. Martindale
1-Mr. Trotter
RAF:mlb (11)

7m-9

(CONTINUED - OVER)

Memorandum to Mr. Conrad
Re: UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
also known as John Willard;
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. -
VICTIM; CIVIL RIGHTS

The Memphis Office requested the Laboratory to determine the sources of many of the items submitted. These examinations are going forward. Some of the items submitted contained hair and foreign fibers of possible value for comparison with suspect's hair and clothing; however, to date, we have received no suspect's hair or clothing for comparison.

All hairs recovered to date are of Caucasian origin rather than of Negroid or other origin.

All material received has been photographed and where appropriate, has been or is being examined for latent fingerprints.

The Memphis Office is being furnished a teletype concerning the firearms, hair and fiber, soil and document examinations today.

ACTION: None. For information.

Mr. W. C. Sullivan

April 5, 1968

G. C. Moore

**MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
CIVIL RIGHTS**

Mr. Albert Hefner called the Bureau at 12:45 a.m. today and advised that he is from Greenwood, Mississippi, and was acquainted with Byron De La Beckwith who has been tried on two occasions for the murder of Medgar Evers. Hefner stated he believes the reason Beckwith was not convicted of the murder of Medgar Evers is that he had an iron-clad alibi and that Beckwith's son actually committed the murder.

Hefner suggested that the FBI look into the whereabouts of Beckwith's son at the time of the shooting of Martin Luther King, Jr.

ACTION:

That this memorandum be routed to the General Investigative Division for consideration in the investigation of the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.

CAP:bff
(5)

- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
 - 1 - Mr. Rosen
 - ① - Mr. McGowan
 - 1 - Mr. Parkis
- m-g*

Mr. W. C. Sullivan

April 5, 1968

G. C. Moore

**ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER
KING, APRIL 4, 1968**

At 3:30 a.m., April 5, 1968, Special Agent James F. McGuire, Night Supervisor, Domestic Intelligence Division, received a telephone call from Mr. Zebulon Strickland, of Fairfax County, Virginia, telephone number 356-8826. Mr. Strickland appeared disturbed and confused, indicating that he had a .44 and a .45 revolver, and felt like shooting someone. Subsequently, he insisted he was not going to shoot anyone.

It was determined that Strickland is listed in Bufiles as a chronic complainant. The Virginia telephone directory listed his address as "1045 Carpr," McLean, Virginia.

At 3:58 p.m., April 5, 1968, the above information was furnished to Senior Resident Agent Jesse Hall, Arlington, Virginia, Resident Agency, who was instructed to furnish the information to the appropriate police department.

ACTION:

For information.

ABF:lrb
(6)

- 1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan
 - 1 - Mr. A. Rosen
 - 1 - Mr. G. C. Moore
 - 1 - Mr. J. F. McGuire
 - 1 - Mr. A. B. Fulton
- Long* *m-1*

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

**UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM
CIVIL RIGHTS**

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Sullivan

We have been successful in tracing the Remington rifle which was found near the scene of the shooting and the box which was with the rifle to a supply company in Birmingham, Alabama. The rifle in question was sold on Saturday, 3/30/68, to an individual giving the name of Harvey Lowmeyer, 1907 South 11th Street, Birmingham, Alabama. This appears to be a fictitious name but the Birmingham Office is continuing thorough investigation to identify the purchaser.

The Birmingham Office determined that the Aero Marine Supply Company, 5701 Airport Highway, Birmingham, Alabama, had on Friday, 3/29/68, sold to Harvey Lowmeyer a .243 caliber Model 700 Remington rifle. He indicated he wanted to go hunting in Wisconsin and had the dealer mount a Redfield scope on the rifle.

The following day, Saturday, 3/30/68, the individual returned the gun stating that it was not the type rifle he wanted and he obtained a Model 760, .30-06 caliber Remington rifle, serial number 461476. At that time he ~~did~~ obtain a box of shells and had the Redfield scope removed from the first rifle and mounted on the .30-06 caliber rifle.

Birmingham Office has advised that it appears that the name Lowmeyer is a fictitious name and efforts are being made to identify the purchaser of the gun. Lowmeyer is described as white male, 36 years of age, 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighing between 150 and 160 pounds.

The rifle which was obtained on 3/29/68 and returned on 3/30/68 together with the box in which it was returned are being obtained by the Birmingham Office and will be flown into the Bureau to be examined for latent fingerprints.

ACTION:

You will be advised of pertinent developments in this matter.

CLM:vea (9)

M-5a

XT
Memo
Long
Mr. DeLoach

A. Rosen

April 5, 1968

1 - Mr. DeLoach

1 - Mr. Rosen

1 - Mr. Malley

1 - Mr. McGowan

1 - Mr. Long

1 - Mr. Callahan

UNKNOWN SUBJECT;

REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

CIVIL RIGHTS

ASAC Clifton Halter of the Memphis Office telephonically advised that a check with the York Arms Company, 162 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, developed that a salesman sold a set of binoculars similar to those recovered after the shooting to an unidentified white man at approximately 4:00 p. m. yesterday afternoon, 4/4/68.

The salesman recalled that the individual in question inquired about a set of binoculars and when he was referred to sets costing \$200 and \$90, he said that the price was too high. At that point the clerk recalled that he had an inexpensive set of binoculars in the window, which he took out of the window in order to make the sale. According to the salesman, the price of the binoculars sold to this individual was \$39.95 plus \$1.60 tax, which is identical with the amount shown on the sales receipt recovered with the binoculars.

The purchaser of the binoculars paid for them with two \$20 bills, one \$1 bill and some change. (It is noted that the rifle which was found with binoculars was paid for in \$20 bills and that the rent for room 5B in the rooming house from which the shot was fired was also paid for with a \$20 bill.)

The salesman described the purchaser of the binoculars as being a white man, approximately 26 - 32 years of age, 5 feet eleven inches, 160 - 175 pounds, medium build, black or dark brown hair, combed straight back. He stated this individual had no regional accent and was neatly dressed in a white shirt with tie, dark suit coat with matching trousers.

Mr-6a

JGK:rmr

(7)

CONTINUED - OVER

Memorandum to Mr. DeLoach
RE: UNSUB; REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

ASAC Halter advised that the York Arms Company is approximately three blocks from the rooming house from which the fatal shot was fired.

ASAC Halter was specifically asked whether he felt that the salesman at the York Arms Company is knowledgeable enough to be of assistance in the preparation of an artist's conception, and he stated that he felt he was.

ACTION:

It is recommended that a qualified representative from the Exhibits Section be sent to Memphis in order to prepare an artist's conception of the suspect who purchased the binoculars at the York Arms Company.

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

1 - Mr. DeLoach

1 - Mr. Rosen

1 - Mr. Malley

1 - Mr. McGowan

1 - Mr. Long

1 - Mr. Callahan

UNKNOWN SUBJECT;

REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

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The purchaser of the binoculars paid for them with two \$20 bills, one \$1 bill and some change. (It is noted that the rifle which was found with binoculars was paid for in \$20 bills and that the rent for room 5B in the rooming house from which the shot was fired was also paid for with a \$20 bill.)

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JGK:rmr
(7)

CONTINUED - OVER

Memorandum to Mr. DeLoach

RE: UNSUB; REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

ASAC Halter advised that the York Arms Company is approximately three blocks from the rooming house from which the fatal shot was fired.

ASAC Halter was specifically asked whether he felt that the salesman at the York Arms Company is knowledgeable enough to be of assistance in the preparation of an artist's conception, and he stated that he felt he was.

ACTION:

It is recommended that a qualified representative from the Exhibits Section be sent to Memphis in order to prepare an artist's conception of the suspect who purchased the binoculars at the York Arms Company. It is further recommended that while there this representative prepared detailed diagram of the crime scene.

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM
CIVIL RIGHTS

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Sullivan

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Birmingham Office has advised that it appears that the name Lowmeyer is a fictitious name and efforts are being made to identify the purchaser of the gun. Lowmeyer is described as white male, 36 years of age, 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighing between 150 and 160 pounds.

The rifle which was obtained on 3/29/68 and returned on 3/30/68 together with the box in which it was returned are being obtained by the Birmingham Office and will be flown into the Bureau to be examined for latent fingerprints.

ACTION:

(ME-2) m-5
You will be advised of pertinent developments in this matter.

CLM:vea (9)

Memo

Mr. W. C. Sullivan

April 5, 1968

G. C. Moore

**ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER
KING, APRIL 4, 1968**

At 11:30 p.m., April 4, 1968, Special Agent Arthur B. Fulton was on duty in the Domestic Intelligence Division and received a telephone call from one John Basko, 12601 Knowledge Lane, Bowie, Maryland, home phone 262-9502, office phone 933-5400.

Mr. Basko advised that at approximately 9:45 p.m., April 4, 1968, he was in "Johnnie Mannises' Road House in 6th and D Street, Southwest, Washington, D. C.," and as he was walking by a telephone, he overheard a man speaking on the phone say "I killed Martin Luther King tonight."

Mr. Basko advised that he could not identify the caller and he could only recall that he was a white male wearing a light gray suit. He did recall that another man, who was possibly with the caller, remarked that "they worked across the street."

ACTION:

Refer to General Investigative Division in connection with the assassination of Martin Luther King.

ABF:lrh
(5)

- 1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. A. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. G. C. Moore
- 1 - Mr. A. B. Fulton

m-4

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Halley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. Martindale
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Sullivan

At the request of the Department a full investigation has been instituted into the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., at Memphis, Tennessee, on the evening of 4/4/68.

Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the President, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division setting out the basic facts of the shooting and summarizing information presently available.

The following details do not appear in the letterhead memorandum:

The individual using the name John Willard, who is a suspect in this case, may be identical with John Hubeart Willard, also known as John Hubbard Willard, FBI No. 934 454-C who received a probationary sentence, 6/25/58, in connection with an arson charge in Mississippi. Extensive efforts are being made to immediately locate John Hubeart Willard.

Although Samuel Marcus Levin and Alex J. Barber, suspects arrested by the police, were released when they were vouched for by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, we are thoroughly checking them out.

ACTION:

1. Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the White House, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division.

2. All-out investigation is continuing on a top priority basis.

Enclosure

ELM:cs
(11)

m-3c



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

*In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.*

April 5, 1968

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

At approximately 6:03 p. m., April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was on a second floor balcony of the Lorraine Hotel and Motel, Memphis, Tennessee. King's associates, who were at the street level, heard a shot and King fell immediately after the shot was heard. He was taken at once to St. Joseph Hospital where he was pronounced dead at 7:05 p. m. Death resulted from bullet damage to major neck vessels and the spinal cord.

Investigation indicates that the shot may have been fired from the second floor bathroom of a rooming house at 422 1/2 South Main Street, approximately 205 feet from where King was standing. A shot was heard from the second floor at approximately 6 p. m. and immediately after the shot was fired, a white man left the bathroom and ran out of the building. The bathroom provides an open view of King's room. Occupants of the rooming house had observed a white man carrying a package approximately three feet in length and possibly wrapped in a piece of blanket. This man occupied Room 5B on April 4, 1968.

Bessie Ruth Brewer, manager of the rooming house, advised that a white man who identified himself only as John Willard and who gave no address, appeared at the rooming house sometime between 3 p. m. and 3:30 p. m., April 4, 1968, and rented Room 5B, paying one week's rent in advance. Room 5B affords a view of the Lorraine Hotel and Motel. We are making every effort to locate Willard as quickly as possible.

Guy Warren Canipe, Sr., operates an amusement machine company approximately 300 feet from King's room. At approximately 6 p. m. he heard a noise at his door. He looked up and saw a man walking away.

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

He then found an open carton and saw a gun barrel in the carton. A piece of green cloth was wrapped around the carton and a small zipper bag was nearby. Canipe also observed a white Mustang being driven away at a high rate of speed.

The items found by Canipe are presently undergoing exhaustive examinations in the FBI Laboratory and extensive efforts are being made to trace each item. The carton contained a .30-06 Springfield caliber Remington Gamemaster rifle, Model 760, serial number 461476. The rifle is equipped with a Redfield variable power telescopic sight. The zipper bag contained various personal items including a pair of binoculars.

The bullet recovered from King's body is also being examined by the FBI Laboratory.

Press reports have referred to two suspects who were arrested after they were observed changing clothes in a garage. These men are Manuel Marcus Levin and Alex J. Hurder. Both have been identified as civil rights workers by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and have been released.

A full investigation has been instituted and every effort is being made to promptly identify the person or persons responsible for this murder.

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malloy
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. Martindale
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Sullivan

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Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the President, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division setting out the basic facts of the shooting and summarizing information presently available.

The following details do not appear in the letterhead memorandum:

The individual using the name John Willard, who is a suspect in this case, may be identical with John Hubeart Willard, also known as John Hubbard Willard, FBI No. 934 454-C who received a probationary sentence, 6/25/58, in connection with an arson charge in Mississippi. Extensive efforts are being made to immediately locate John Hubeart Willard.

Although Samuel Marcus Levin and Alex J. Hurder, suspects arrested by the police, were released when they were vouched for by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, we are thoroughly checking them out.

ACTION:

1. Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the White House, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division.

2. All-out investigation is continuing on a top priority basis.

Enclosure

FLH:cs
(11)

m-3b

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
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2. All-out investigation is continuing on a top priority basis.

Enclosure

FLJ:cs
(11)

M-3a



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

*In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.*

April 5, 1968

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

At approximately 6:03 p. m., April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was on a second floor balcony of the Lorraine Hotel and Motel, Memphis, Tennessee. King's associates, who were at the street level, heard a shot and King fell immediately after the shot was heard. He was taken at once to St. Joseph Hospital where he was pronounced dead at 7:05 p. m. Death resulted from bullet damage to major neck vessels and the spinal cord.

Investigation indicates that the shot may have been fired from the second floor bathroom of a rooming house at 422 1/2 South Main Street, approximately 205 feet from where King was standing. A shot was heard from the second floor at approximately 6 p. m. and immediately after the shot was fired, a white man left the bathroom and ran out of the building. The bathroom provides an open view of King's room. Occupants of the rooming house had observed a white man carrying a package approximately three feet in length and possibly wrapped in a piece of blanket. This man occupied Room 5B on April 4, 1968.

Bessie Ruth Brewer, manager of the rooming house, advised that a white man who identified himself only as John Willard and who gave no address, appeared at the rooming house sometime between 3 p. m. and 3:30 p. m., April 4, 1968, and rented Room 5B, paying one week's rent in advance. Room 5B affords a view of the Lorraine Hotel and Motel. We are making every effort to locate Willard as quickly as possible.

Guy Warren Canipe, Sr., operates an amusement machine company approximately 300 feet from King's room. At approximately 6 p. m. he heard a noise at his door. He looked up and saw a man walking away.

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

He then found an open carton and saw a gun barrel in the carton. A piece of green cloth was wrapped around the carton and a small zipper bag was nearby. Canipe also observed a white Mustang being driven away at a high rate of speed.

The items found by Canipe are presently undergoing exhaustive examinations in the FBI Laboratory and extensive efforts are being made to trace each item. The carton contained a .30-06 Springfield caliber Remington Gamemaster rifle, Model 760, serial number 461476. The rifle is equipped with a Redfield variable power telescopic sight. The zipper bag contained various personal items including a pair of binoculars.

The bullet recovered from King's body is also being examined by the FBI Laboratory.

Press reports have referred to two suspects who were arrested after they were observed changing clothes in a garage. These men are Manuel Marcus Levin and Alex J. Hurder. Both have been identified as civil rights workers by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and have been released.

A full investigation has been instituted and every effort is being made to promptly identify the person or persons responsible for this murder.

*Memo
Folder*

Mr. DeLoach

April 5, 1968

A. Rosen

MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. Martindale
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Sullivan

At the request of the Department a full investigation has been instituted into the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., at Memphis, Tennessee, on the evening of 4/4/68.

Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the President, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division setting out the basic facts of the shooting and summarizing information presently available.

The following details do not appear in the letterhead memorandum:

The individual using the name John Willard, who is a suspect in this case, may be identical with John Hubeart Willard, also known as John Hubbard Willard, FBI No. 934 454-C who received a probationary sentence, 6/25/58, in connection with an arson charge in Mississippi. Extensive efforts are being made to immediately locate John Hubeart Willard.

Although Samuel Marcus Levin and Alex J. Hurder, suspects arrested by the police, were released when they were vouched for by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, we are thoroughly checking them out.

ACTION:

1. Attached is a letterhead memorandum for the White House, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division.

2. All-out investigation is continuing on a top priority basis.

Enclosure

FLH:cs
(11)

m-3



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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*In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.*

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A full investigation has been instituted and every effort is being made to promptly identify the person or persons responsible for this murder.

4-4

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

April 4, 1968

Stephen J. Pollak
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division

Unknown subjects; Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr., Victim;
Conspiracy Against Rights,
CIVIL RIGHTS

I have been advised by telephone that Dr. Martin Luther King was this date shot and wounded by an unidentified person or persons in Memphis, Tennessee, where he traveled to lead a demonstration march scheduled for April 8, 1968.

Please conduct a full investigation into a possible violation of 18 U.S.C. 241 and keep me currently advised of all developments.

Handwritten signature

Mr. Rosen

April 4, 1968

C. L. McGowan

1 - Mr. Rosen

1 - Mr. Malley

1 - Mr. McGowan

1 - Mr. McDonough

1 - Mr. Long 1 - Mr. Schmidt

UNKNOWN SUBJECT;

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING (DECEASED) - VICTIM

CIVIL RIGHTS

ASAC Cliff Halter, Memphis Division, by telephone at 9:40 p. m., advised of developments in the shooting by a sniper of Dr. Martin Luther King. King was shot shortly before 7 p. m., April 4, 1968, as he stood on the balcony of his second floor room at the Lorraine Hotel and Motel, 406 Mulberry Street, Memphis. Witnesses heard a shot, saw King fall, and it is believed the shot came from a low class hotel across the street. Drs. J. N. Barrasso and Frederick Giora, St. Joseph's Hospital, Memphis, advised our Agents Dr. King was pronounced dead at 7:05 p. m. Death was caused by a bullet which tore major neck vessels and severed the spinal cord at the root of the neck.

A Deputy Sheriff patrolling routinely in the area observed a young white male throw a rifle and bag on the sidewalk and keep running. Police recovered a Remington Game Master, Model 760, with a scope sight containing one 30.06 shell. The bag recovered by police contains a box of Peters cartridges, binoculars, and various items of clothing.

Agents are to fly all items of evidence to Washington, D. C., tonight for Laboratory examination. As far as known, one bullet was fired and the spent bullet has not been recovered as yet and is believed to be in King's body.

ASAC Halter mentioned there has been sporadic looting in the City of Memphis. News reports reflected a curfew has been imposed on the City of Memphis and 4,000 National Guard troops have been ordered into the city.

Assistant Director Conrad was advised and will arrange standby coverage for Laboratory examination.

John Creighton, Identification Division, was advised and has two latent fingerprint men standing by on duty.

DAS:hw

(7)

CONTINUED - OVER

SEE ADDENDUM PAGE TWO...

Memorandum to Mr. Rosen

RE: UNKNOWN SUBJECT; DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING (DECEASED)

At 10:20 p.m., ASAC Halter advised two suspects were picked up by Memphis police when they were found to be changing clothes in a "garage" one or two blocks from the scene of the shooting. The suspects are Manual Marcus Levin, white male, born 7-2-45, who claims to be a civil rights worker and a law student at the University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi; the other is Alex Jay Murder, white male, born 4-20-45, resides 926 West Markham, Durham, North Carolina, and claims to be a civil rights worker and a law student at Duke University. Bureau indices were checked and no direct references to these individuals were found and references on variations being reviewed. Identification Division advised they have no record of fingerprints in civil or criminal files.

The shot is now believed to have been fired from a bathroom window at 420 South Main Street, Memphis, about 100 yards from where King was standing. Three witnesses who reportedly saw the shooting are being interviewed by Memphis Agents.

Senior Resident Agent, Nashville, has been in touch with the Governor of Tennessee who has called out the National Guard.

Memphis anticipates forwarding evidence by plane departing Memphis 12:25 a.m., or 12:30 a.m., 4-5-68, arriving Dulles Airport 4:05 a.m., or 4:17 a.m., and will advise when definitely arranged.

ADDENDUM:

REL:cs 4/5/68

At 11:30 p.m., ASAC Halter advised at this point they have three witnesses interviewed, have determined the serial number of the rifle to be 461476, a Remington Gamemaster Model 760. ASAC Halter was instructed to immediately call the New Haven Office to have tracings of this rifle instituted. ASAC Halter further stated that according to the news releases one Charles Stephens was a witness to this case and ASAC Halter stated that he would make arrangements to interview this person, if not already done. ASAC Halter also was instructed to obtain fingerprints of both suspects Levin and Murder, along with major case prints. ASAC Halter was instructed to maintain the chain of evidence, to obtain copies of any autopsy reports and to

ADDENDUM CONTINUED:

particularly try to obtain the bullet from the body of victim. ASAC Halter was reminded again of the paramount importance of keeping the Bureau advised on all developments and to particularly alert Charlotte and Jackson Offices to obtain information regarding the suspects, if this matter works out.

At 11:47 p.m., ASAC Halter stated that reservations had been made for Agent Bob Fitzpatrick, Flight 610 of Braniff Airways, departing Memphis at 12:25 a.m. and to arrive at Dulles Airport, Washington, D. C., at 4:05 p.m. 4/5/68. ASAC Halter stated that Fitzpatrick will have with him all the evidence as gathered to date.

At 12:05 a.m., 4/5/68, Mr. Jevons of the Laboratory was notified of the above and Mr. Creighton of the Laboratory was advised of this matter.

At 12:15 a.m., 4/5/68, SAC Jensen of Memphis called and stated that he wanted to advise that he recovered three \$20 bills from the landlady, and one of these \$20 bills is a bill given to the landlady by the suspect. He stated that also included in the evidence would be a rifle in a box, the bullet from the body of King, one empty cartridge as well as bullets in a box. SAC Jensen also stated that in consideration of elimination points from any evidence submitted, the following should be considered as elimination: SA O. E. Johnson, SAC Jensen and Inspector M. E. Muckery (MA), Memphis Police Department. SAC Jensen further stated that a blanket would also be sent to the Laboratory which contains particles of mud. SAC Jensen advised that he would desire that all possible examinations be conducted of the evidence submitted in order to develop any suspects of any investigative aids possible.

At 12:25 a.m., Mr. Jevons of the Laboratory, at 12:35 a.m., Mr. Tony Latona of the Latent Fingerprint Section and Mr. Dan Bailey of the Latent Fingerprint Section were all advised of the information furnished by SAC Jensen and of his specific desires concerning examination of evidence.

At 1:05 a.m., on 4/5/68, SAC Jensen advised that they have determined that a person fired a shot from the window of a bathroom approximately 205 feet from where victim was standing. They have conducted neighborhood investigation concerning this and have determined that one John Willard rented a room in the same house that shot came from, and upon paying landlady \$8.50 for a week's rent she recalled his name as

ADDENDUM CONTINUED:

John Willard. SAC Jensen advised that Willard lives at 420 South Main Street in Memphis. He stated that they are continuing to pursue every angle of this investigation and will keep the Bureau informed. At 1:28 a.m., SAC Johnson of Chicago called and stated that the informant who would be very helpful in a possible solution of this matter, is out of pocket, but they are endeavoring to try to locate him with the express purpose of recommending that he proceed to Memphis for possible solution of the case. SAC Johnson stated that before any of this is done, however, he will transmit a teletype to the Bureau for clearance.

At 2:15 a.m., SAC Jensen advised that he is extremely interested in the serial number of the scope as well as the manufacturer and of any information concerning the clamps used. SAC Jensen stated that nothing further has developed as yet. He stated that Agent Fitzpatrick is definitely airborne as of this minute en route to Washington, D. C.

At 3:50 a.m., SAC Jensen advised that nothing new has transpired in this matter, however, they have determined that the person who is a suspect is possibly aged 27-35, a white male and 5' 11" tall. He also stated that in the contents belonging to the suspect is a bar of soap (Cashmere Bouquet) from the Friendship Inn Motel, and also a couple of naps. He stated that they have also found articles of clothing which contain a laundry ticket, and they are presently checking this out.

At 4:32 a.m., the Identification Division advised that they have located a record for one John Hubert Willard, Memphis Police Department number 96257, also known as John Hubbard Willard, FBI number 934 454-C. Also his arrest record indicates that Willard was arrested by the Memphis Police Department on 4/18/58, based upon a fugitive warrant from Pontotoc, Mississippi. He was released to the Sheriff's Office Pontotoc on 4/18/58. The second and last entry records that fingerprints were contributed by Sheriff's Office, Pontotoc, Miss., on 6/25/58, for charges of arson and disposition given as three years' probation. The Identification Division also advised that they have advised Memphis of this information and Memphis is in receipt of the arrest record as well as photographs of Willard. Identification Division advised that a description of this individual would be as white male, height 5'11", weight 150-155, DOB 2/24/38 at Pontotoc, Miss., brown hair, dark green eyes, ruddy complexion and medium build.

ADDENDUM CONTINUED:

At 4:43 a.m., SAC Jensen also advised of this information record in the Identification Division concerning Willard, and he was advised that the Bureau would immediately call Jackson to thoroughly and exhaustively check this matter out concerning Willard at Pontotoc, Mississippi.

At 4:50 a.m., SAC Moore was advised of this information record in the Identification Division files and SAC Moore was instructed to immediately determine the whereabouts of Willard and also all possible avenues to thoroughly check this matter out to determine if Willard can be a suspect. SAC Moore stated he would immediately do this and he would, of course, keep the Bureau advised.

At 5:16 a.m., Mr. Jevons of the Laboratory called to advise that the evidence as delivered by SA Fitzpatrick is now in possession of the Laboratory, and they are commencing to process this material.