

Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

Ralph never said the money being offered was to kill King. Powell states neither he nor his brother were involved in the murder of King.

Claude Powell, Jr., was interviewed and although he also claims a payment offer was made to kill King, his account differs somewhat from that of Leon Owen Powell. Claude Powell, Jr., states that three or four weeks prior to the murder of King, he and his brother, Leon, were seated in a booth in Pete's Bar in Atlanta. Ray Godfrey, a friend of Leon's, joined them in their booth and engaged in conversation with Leon. Claude paid no particular attention to what they were talking about. Godfrey then left the booth and approximately ten to fifteen minutes later, an unknown subject (unsub), a white male, joined them in their booth and placed an expensive-looking briefcase on the table. The unsub told them he wanted them to kill King and would pay \$25,000 now and \$25,000 when the job was done. The unsub then opened his briefcase, which was full of wrapped currency. Claude stated he was shocked, assumed it was some sort of a joke and he ignored the unsub. The unsub then closed his briefcase and departed.

Ray Godfrey has been fully identified as Arnold Ray Godfrey and has advised that he did not talk with either of the Powells re the assassination of King nor did he introduce anyone to them re the assassination of King. He denied all knowledge of any assassination plot re King.

The CRB requested that Bureau polygraph examinations be afforded to Godfrey and to the Powells to attempt to resolve this allegation.

When Arnold Ray Godfrey was interviewed on 1/13/76, and denied any involvement in this matter, he agreed to submit to a polygraph. When he was contacted on 1/16/76, however, Godfrey stated "I am innocent" and then advised he did not wish to take any polygraph examination and did not wish to talk to the FBI any further. He stated if the FBI needs any further information, they should contact his attorney.

On 1/16/76, Claude Powell, Jr., was afforded a Bureau polygraph examination at Midland, Texas. The polygraph examiner concluded that Claude Powell's response to certain questions indicated he is "truth-telling" in stating someone did, in fact, offer him and his brother \$50,000 to kill Dr. King. Claude Powell's response to another question and his reactions following the answer indicate he has possible knowledge regarding the unidentified person who made the payment offer.

2 CONTINUED - OVER

Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

The results of our investigation have been closely coordinated with the CRD. Mr. Robert A. Murphy, Chief, Criminal Section, CRD, stated he desired to know the results of the polygraph examination of Leon Owen Powell, who was not immediately available, before making a determination as to whether Godfrey's attorney should be contacted concerning his polygraph examination, and before making a determination as to what additional investigation should be conducted to resolve this allegation.

DETAILS: Leon Owen Powell was not available for a Bureau polygraph examination until the p.m. of 1/29/76. During pre-polygraph interview, Leon Owen Powell stated Godfrey never mentioned the amount of money to be paid other than "big money." (Initially stated Godfrey offered \$50,000.) He advised while at the bar, someone stated King should be killed, and Claude made statement to the effect he would kill him for the right amount of money. When questioned during the polygraph about Ralph (LNU) saying he had \$25,000 in the briefcase, Powell stated Ralph had only said "25," and there would be "50" (not \$50,000 as initially stated) when King was buried.

During the polygraph Powell appeared to have difficulty in breathing, and stated he was very nervous concerning the whole matter. The polygraph examination was determined to be "inconclusive."

On 2/2/76, this matter was thoroughly discussed with Departmental Attorney Murphy. He stated Godfrey's attorney should not be contacted at this time, and the following additional investigation should be conducted to resolve this allegation: Reinterview the Powells to resolve differences in their accounts of the alleged meeting; have each of the Powells prepare a diagram of the bar and booth where alleged meeting took place; verify that Powells and Godfrey were in Atlanta at time of alleged meeting; interview co-workers of Claude to see if he has talked about this alleged meeting; identify and interview former employees and customers of

Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

Pete's Bar re any knowledge of alleged meeting or of Ralph (LNU); conduct investigation into the background of Godfrey; interview Claude's wife; reinterview Dorothy Davis, wife of deceased bar owner Pete Davis, to see if he had ever talked of any such payment offer; show artist's conception of Ralph (LNU) (as prepared by Leon) to Claude and all pertinent witnesses; show on an Atlanta city map location of Pete's Bar in comparison to where James Earl Ray stayed in Atlanta; and conduct other obvious and logical investigation.

Mr. Murphy advised he was advising the USA, Atlanta and the USA, Memphis, of the institution of this investigation re the Powell allegation.

Mr. Murphy stated the FBI should not comment to any inquiries from the news media concerning this investigation, and any such inquiries should be referred to the CRD.

Atlanta and El Paso are being instructed by separate communication to promptly conduct this investigation.

ACTION: For information. You will be advised of any pertinent developments.

PLAINTEXT

TELETYPE

NITEL

TO ATLANTA (44-2386)

2/3/76

EL PASO (44-920)

MEMPHIS (44-1987)

1 - Mr. Peelman

FROM DIRECTOR FBI (44-38861)

1 - Mr. Helterhoff

MURKIN

CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION (CRD), U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
HAS REQUESTED FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATION TO RESOLVE  
THE ALLEGATION OF LEON OWEN POWELL AND CLAUDE POWELL, JR.

ATLANTA AND EL PASO SHOULD THOROUGHLY REVIEW THE  
INTERVIEWS OF THE POWELLS NOTING THE DIFFERENCES IN EACH OF  
THEIR VERSIONS AND REINTERVIEW THE POWELLS TO FURTHER  
RESOLVE ALL DETAILS OF THIS ALLEGED MEETING IN THE BAR.  
DETERMINE WHEN AND HOW MANY TIMES THEY TALKED WITH EACH OTHER  
ABOUT THIS ALLEGED MEETING SINCE ITS OCCURRENCE. DETERMINE  
FROM THEM HOW IT CAN BE VERIFIED THAT THEY WERE IN ATLANTA  
AT THE TIME OF THE ALLEGED MEETING AND CONDUCT ANY  
INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION TO VERIFY THEY WERE ACTUALLY  
IN ATLANTA AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING. HAVE EACH OF THE  
POWELLS PREPARE A DIAGRAM OF THE INTERIOR OF PETE'S BAR,  
INCLUDING THE BOOTH WHERE EACH PARTICIPANT OF THE ALLEGED

HNH:bap (4)

SEE NOTE PAGE 5...

PAGE TWO (44-3886)

MEETING WAS SEATED. DETERMINE FROM EACH IF THE UNSUB (RALPH LNU) HAD ANY TYPE OF AN ACCENT. EL PASO QUESTION CLAUDE SPECIFICALLY RE POLYGRAPH INDICATING HE HAS POSSIBLE KNOWLEDGE REGARDING THE UNIDENTIFIED PERSON AS SET FORTH IN YOUR JANUARY 20, 1976, TELETYPE.

EL PASO SHOULD SHOW THE ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF RALPH (LNU) (THE FINAL, AS PREPARED BY LEON OWEN POWELL) TO CLAUDE POWELL, JR., IN A SPREAD OF PHOTOGRAPHS. EL PASO SHOULD ALSO INTERVIEW CO-WORKERS OF CLAUDE POWELL, JR., TO DETERMINE IF HE HAS TALKED ABOUT THIS ALLEGED MEETING. RE-CHECK RECORDS OF SCOTTISH INN FOR RECORD OF ANY OUTGOING CALLS MADE BY CLAUDE POWELL, JR.

ATLANTA SHOULD ASCERTAIN IF ANY RECORDS ARE IN EXISTENCE TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY OF ALL FORMER EMPLOYEES OF PETE'S BAR AND INTERVIEW THEM FOR ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THIS INCIDENT AND ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY RALPH (LNU).

ATLANTA SHOULD ALSO IDENTIFY AND INTERVIEW ALL KNOWN FORMER CUSTOMERS OF PETE'S BAR NOTING THAT DIANE BRADY, WHO OPERATES "THE OFFICE" BAR, STATED A LOT OF THE CUSTOMERS ARE STILL AROUND AND FREQUENT HER BAR, "THE OFFICE."

PAGE THREE (44-38861)

MAKE FURTHER ATTEMPTS TO IDENTIFY AND INTERVIEW "DUKE."  
ATLANTA SHOULD MAKE FURTHER EFFORTS TO LOCATE AND INTERVIEW  
"DOTTIE," A FORMER EMPLOYEE OF PETE'S BAR. IF NECESSARY,  
IF IT CAN BE ARRANGED, HAVE DIANE BRADY OBSERVE DOTTIE UNDERHILL TO  
DETERMINE IF SHE IS IDENTICAL WITH THE DOTTIE FORMERLY EMPLOYED AT  
PETE'S BAR, SINCE UNDERHILL DENIED SHE EVER WORKED THERE.

ATLANTA SHOULD CONDUCT INVESTIGATION INTO THE BACKGROUND  
OF ARNOLD RAY GODFREY TO ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE ALLEGATION  
BY THE POWELLS THAT HE INTRODUCED THE UNSUB TO THEM IN THE  
BAR. IDENTIFY AND INTERVIEW HIS RELATIVES, ASSOCIATES,  
INCLUDING ANY "COUNTRY AND WESTERN SINGER" ASSOCIATES.  
PARTICULARLY DETERMINE IF GODFREY EVER KNOWN TO ASSOCIATE  
WITH A RALPH AND ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY AND INTERVIEW RALPH.  
VERIFY GODFREY'S PRESENCE IN ATLANTA AT TIME OF ALLEGED  
MEETING. CRD STATED GODFREY'S ATTORNEY SHOULD NOT BE  
CONTACTED AT THIS TIME.

ATLANTA INTERVIEW JACKIE POWELL, 4163 CANBY LANE, DECATUR,  
GEORGIA, WIFE OF CLAUDE POWELL, JR., FOR ANY KNOWLEDGE  
OF THIS INCIDENT, INCLUDING WHETHER CLAUDE POWELL, JR., EVER  
TOLD HER ABOUT THIS ALLEGED PAYMENT OFFER.



PAGE FOUR (44-38861)

ATLANTA AND EL PASO SHOULD SHOW THE ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF RALPH (LNU) IN A SPREAD TO ALL PERTINENT WITNESSES.

ATLANTA REINTERVIEW DOROTHY DAVIS RE REMEMBERING WHETHER HER HUSBAND EVER TOLD HER OF ANYONE COMING INTO BAR WITH LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY, OR IF SHE HAS ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THIS INCIDENT; SHOW ON AN ATLANTA CITY MAP LOCATION OF PETE'S BAR IN COMPARISON TO WHERE JAMES EARL RAY HAD STAYED IN ATLANTA.

THE CRD IS ADVISING THE USAS AT ATLANTA AND MEMPHIS OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE INVESTIGATION RE THE POWELL ALLEGATION. CRD, HOWEVER, REQUESTED THAT YOU DO NOT DISSEMINATE ANY INFORMATION TO THE USAS. IF THE USAS HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, ADVISE THEM TO CONTACT THE CRD DIRECT.

CRD STATED THE FBI SHOULD NOT COMMENT TO ANY INQUIRIES FROM THE NEWS MEDIA CONCERNING THIS INVESTIGATION AND ANY SUCH INQUIRIES SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE CRD.

ATLANTA SHOULD COORDINATE ALL ASPECTS OF THIS INVESTIGATION TO RESOLVE THE POWELL ALLEGATION. HANDLE ANY ADDITIONAL OBVIOUS AND LOGICAL LEADS DEVELOPED AND IF ANY QUESTION ARISES RE COVERING ANY ADDITIONAL LEAD, PROMPTLY CONTACT FBIHQ.

PAGE FIVE (44-3886J)

PROMPTLY CONDUCT THIS INVESTIGATION AND SUTEL  
SUMMARY ON A DAILY BASIS UNTIL THIS INVESTIGATION  
IS COMPLETED. HANDLE ANY LEADS OUT OF YOUR  
DIVISION BY-TELETYPE. HANDLE PURSUANT TO SECTION 27,  
VOLUME II, MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS.  
END

NOTE: See Peelman to Gallagher memorandum, same date,  
same caption.



Civil Rights Division

2/3/76

ATTENTION: ROBERT A. MURPHY

ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

my

2/2/76

xx (B/HWH/69

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO....

NOTE: Reference is made to a conversation between Departmental Attorney Robert A. Murphy and SA H. N. Helterhoff on 2/2/76 wherein Mr. Murphy requested the following investigation:

Atlanta and El Paso should thoroughly review the interviews of the Powells noting the differences in each of their versions and reinterview the Powells to further resolve all details of this alleged meeting in the bar. Determine when and how many times they talked with each other about this alleged meeting since its occurrence. Determine from them how it can be verified that they were in Atlanta at the time of the alleged meeting and conduct any independent investigation to verify they were actually in Atlanta at the time of the meeting. Have each of the Powells prepare a diagram of the interior of Pete's Bar, including the booth where each participant of the alleged meeting was seated. Determine from each if the unsub (Ralph LNU) had any type of an accent. El Paso question Claude specifically re polygraph indicating he has possible knowledge regarding the unidentified person.

El Paso should show the artist's conception of Ralph (LNU) (the final, as prepared by Leon Owen Powell) to Claude Powell, Jr., in a spread of photographs. El Paso should also interview co-workers of Claude Powell, Jr., to determine if he has talked about this alleged meeting. El Paso will re-check records of Scottish Inn for record of any outgoing calls made by Claude Powell, Jr.

Atlanta should ascertain if any records are in existence to establish identity of all former employees of Pete's Bar and interview them for any knowledge of this incident and attempt to identify Ralph (LNU).

Atlanta should also identify and interview all known former customers of Pete's Bar noting that Diane Brady, who operates "the office" bar, stated a lot of the customers are still around and frequent her bar, "the office." Make further attempts to identify and interview "Duke." Atlanta should make further efforts to locate and interview "Dottie," a former employee of Pete's Bar. If necessary, if it can be arranged, have Diane Brady observe Dottie Underhill to determine if she is identical with the Dottie formerly employed at Pete's Bar, since Underhill denied she ever worked there.

Atlanta should conduct investigation into the background of Arnold Ray Godfrey to attempt to resolve the allegation by the Powells that he introduced the unsub to them in the bar. Identify and interview his relatives, associates, including any "country and western singer" associates. Particularly determine if Godfrey ever known to associate with a Ralph and attempt to identify and interview Ralph. Verify Godfrey's presence in Atlanta at time of alleged meeting. Mr. Murphy stated Godfrey's attorney should not be contacted at this time.

Atlanta interview Jackie Powell, 4163 Canby Lane, Decatur, Georgia, wife of Claude Powell, Jr., for any knowledge of this incident, including whether Claude Powell, Jr., ever told her about this alleged payment offer.

Atlanta and El Paso should show the artist's conception of Ralph (LNU) in a spread to all pertinent witnesses.

Atlanta reinterview Dorothy Davis re remembering whether her husband ever told her of anyone coming into bar with large amount of money, or if she has any knowledge of this incident; show on an Atlanta city map location of Pete's Bar in comparison to where James Earl Ray had stayed in Atlanta.

Mr. Murphy stated he is advising the USAs at Atlanta and Memphis of the institution of the investigation re the Powell allegation.

Mr. Murphy also stated that no information should be disseminated to the USAs. Mr. Murphy stated that the FBI should not comment to any inquiries from the news media concerning this investigation and any such inquiries should be referred to the CRD.

Civil Rights Division

February 2, 1976  
ATTN: ROBERT A. MURPHY

ASSASSINATION OF  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

B. x HNH:mlr

<sup>1</sup>  
NOTE: Enclosed is a copy of a teletype from Atlanta dated 1/30/76.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 30 1976

TELETYPE

NR025 AT PLAIN

9:17 PM NITEL 1-30-76 HLF

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861) (57-5-2)

EL PASO (44-923) (AM)

SAN ANTONIO (44-1242) (AM)

MEMPHIS (AM)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (94-481) (P)

MURKIN.

ON JANUARY 29, 1976, AT 7:45 PM, LEON OWEN POWELL, AFTER EXECUTING FD 328 (POLYGRAPH CONSENT FORM), UNDERTOOK POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION IN ATLANTA OFFICE OF FBI. ASSISTING IN COLLATERAL INTERVIEW WAS SA AUGUST W. BULFER. POWELL DURING PRE-POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW FURNISHED SUBSTANTIALLY SAME INFORMATION AS IN PREVIOUS INTERVIEWS WITH EXCEPTION TO INFORMATION CONCERNING MONEY OFFERED BY GODFREY. POWELL, ACCORDING TO HIS RECOLLECTION, STATED GODFREY NEVER MENTIONED THE AMOUNT OF MONEY TO BE PAID BUT INDICATED HE STATED HE WAS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS INTERESTED IN MAKING "BIG MONEY." ALSO GODFREY INDICATED "BIG MONEY" WOULD BE PAID FOR KILLING MARTIN LUTHER KING. POWELL PREVIOUSLY STATED GODFREY

END PAGE ONE

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PAGE TWO, AT 44-2386

MADE STATEMENT FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS WAS TO BE PAID. HOWEVER, WHEN GOING OVER POLYGRAPH QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED OF HIM, HE REQUESTED THAT THE AMOUNT BE DELETED FROM QUESTION AND WORDS "BIG MONEY" BE SUBSTITUTED FOR FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

ACCORDING TO POWELL, THE CONVERSATION WITH GODFREY CAME ABOUT WHILE THEY WERE SITTING IN PETE'S BAR DURING FALL OF 1967 AND CONVERSATION WAS CONCERNING MARTIN LUTHER KING'S ACTIVITIES AT WHICH TIME SOMEONE STATED KING SHOULD BE KILLED AND POWELL'S BROTHER, CLAUDE POWELL, MADE STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT HE WOULD KILL HIM FOR THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF MONEY. POWELL ADVISED A COUPLE OF DAYS AFTER THE INITIAL CONVERSATION WITH GODFREY WHILE THEY WERE IN PETE'S BAR, A WHITE MALE ENTERED THE BAR INQUIRING ABOUT THE POWELLS. AFTER LOCATING THEM, HE STATED HE CAME TO TALK TO THEM CONCERNING A MATTER THAT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN DISCUSSED AFTER THEY ACKNOWLEDGE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE THAT THEY KNEW WHY HE WAS THERE. THE WHITE MALE, WHOM POWELL IDENTIFIED AS RALPH, THEN ASKED IF THEY WERE READY TO GO THROUGH WITH IT. POWELL STATED THIS WHITE MALE NEVER

END PAGE TWO



PAGE THREE, AT 44-2386

MENTIONED THE KILLING OF KING OR DISCUSSED HOW THE KILLING WOULD TAKE PLACE BUT ONLY DISPLAYED A SMALL BRIEFCASE WHICH CONTAINED A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY. ONE QUESTION ON THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION WAS "DID RALPH SAY HE HAD \$25,000 IN THE BRIEFCASE?" HOWEVER, POWELL STATED RALPH NEVER INDICATED THE EXACT AMOUNT, ONLY STATING HE HAD "TWENTY-FIVE". POWELL, WHEN QUESTIONED AS TO WHETHER HE MEANT TWENTYFIVE HUNDRED OR TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND, STATED RALPH NEVER DID STATE THE AMOUNT BUT HE REALIZED THAT THAT MUCH MONEY IN THAT SIZE BRIEFCASE WOULD HAVE TO BE AT LEAST TWENTYFIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS. RALPH ALSO MADE STATEMENT THAT THERE WOULD BE "FIFTY MORE" WHEN MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS BURIED. HOWEVER, WHEN HE QUESTIONED THEM AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THEY WOULD GO THROUGH WITH IT, CLAUDE POWELL STATED THEY WOULD HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT AT WHICH TIME RALPH DEPARTED THE BAR STATING THAT IF THEY HAD NOT MADE UP THEIR MINDS BY THAT TIME, HE COULD NOT DO BUSINESS WITH THEM.

POWELL WAS AFFORDED FOUR SEPARATE EXAMINATIONS, THE FIRST BEING A CARD TEST WHERE POWELL VIEWED THREE DIFFERENT CARDS

END PAGE THREE



PAGE FOUR, AT 44-2386

OF DIFFERENT COLORS BUT WAS ADVISED TO DELIBERATELY LIE TO THE COLOR OF TWO OF THESE CARDS. IT WAS NOTED THE RESULTS OF THIS EXAMINATION INDICATED NO SIGNIFICANT REACTION TO THESE QUESTIONS AND THIS TEST WAS INCONCLUSIVE,

EXAMINATIONS TWO, THREE AND FOUR, ALL CONTAINING RELEVANT, IRRELEVANT AND CONTROL QUESTIONS, THE RELEVANT QUESTIONS CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY GODFREY AND CONTACT BY RALPH, WERE ALSO INCONCLUSIVE IN THAT POWELL DID NOT REACT SIGNIFICANTLY TO ANY ONE OF THESE QUESTIONS. POWELL DID REACT TO TWO QUESTIONS CONCERNING GODFREY, PARTICULARLY THE QUESTIONS, "DID GODFREY EVER ASK YOU IF YOU WERE INTERESTED IN MAKING BIG MONEY?" AND "DID GODFREY TELL YOU THE BIG MONEY WAS TO KILL MARTIN LUTHER KING?" THE REACTION INDICATED ON THE CHART WAS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY STRONG ENOUGH TO DRAW A CONCLUSION AS TO DECEPTION AND IT IS POSSIBLE THIS REACTION COULD BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO POWELL'S CHANGING HIS STORY FROM THE ORIGINAL INTERVIEW OF GODFREY MAKING THE STATEMENT CONCERNING \$50,000 TO NOW STATING "BIG MONEY."

END PAGE FOUR



PAGE FIVE, AT 44-2386

DURING THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION, POWELL APPEARED TO HAVE DIFFICULTY BREATHING AND THE UPPER PNEUMOGRAPH HAD TO BE CONTINUALLY ADJUSTED BY THE EXAMINER. POWELL DID NOT APPEAR OVERLY NERVOUS, DID NOT DISPLAY ANY OUTWARD SIGN OF EMOTION, BUT DID STATE ALL DURING THE POLYGRAPH THAT HE WAS VERY NERVOUS CONCERNING THIS WHOLE MATTER AND THAT HE HAD A HARD TIME BREATHING PROPERLY, PARTICULARLY AS THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION PROGRESSED. WHEN QUESTIONED CONCERNING RESPONSES INDICATED ON THE CHART, POWELL WOULD ONLY STATE THAT HE WAS TELLING THE TRUTH AND THAT HE TOLD ALL THAT HE KNEW AND COULD RECALL CONCERNING THIS INCIDENT. POWELL INDICATED HE HAD A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE, HOWEVER, HE APPEARED TO BE OF LIMITED INTELLIGENCE AND APPEARED TO BE MUCH OLDER THAN FORTY YEARS OF AGE. DURING QUESTIONING, HE ADMITTED TO DOING A LOT OF BEER DRINKING, HOWEVER, DENIED DRINKING ANYTHING DURING THE DAY OF THE EXAMINATION.

A REVIEW OF THREE CHARTS REFLECTS POWELL RESPONDED GENERALLY IN THE SAME MANNER TO ALL QUESTIONS ASKED WITH NO SIGNIFICANT RESPONSE TO ANY INDIVIDUAL QUESTION WHEREBY A  
END PAGE FIVE



PAGE SIX, AT 44-2386

CONCLUSION COULD BE DRAWN AS TO HIS BEING TRUTHFUL OR  
UNTRUTHFUL. THEREFORE, THESE POLYGRAPH EXAMINATIONS WERE  
DETERMINED TO BE INCONCLUSIVE.

END.

PLS ACK FOR TWO

DLA FBIHQ

ACK FOR TWO



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 27 1976

TELETYPE

NR005 AT PLAIN

2:45 PM NITEL 1-27-76 LMM

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

MURKIN.

RE ATLANTA NITEL TO THE BUREAU, JANUARY 20, 1976.

RECONTACT WITH LEON POWELL'S RELATIVES DETERMINED THAT POWELL HAS NOW MOVED TO THE CROOK'S CORNER ROOMING HOUSE LOCATED IN THE VICINITY OF ALSTON STREET AND CANDLER ROAD IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA. POWELL'S RELATIVES FURTHER ADVISED THAT POWELL DOES NOT HAVE A PHONE AT THAT ADDRESS AND ATTEMPTS TO LOCATE HIM HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE.

ATLANTA WILL LOCATE POWELL AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO HAVE HIM APPEAR AND TAKE A POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION DURING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 2, 1976.

UACB, ATLANTA WILL SUBMIT NO FURTHER TELETYPES IN THIS MATTER UNTIL POWELL IS POLYGRAPHED.

POWELL BROTHERS, LEON AND CLAUDE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END.

HOLD

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F B I

Transmit in \_\_\_\_\_ Via **TELECOPIER**

(Type in plaintext or code)

(Precedence)

**TO: SAC, ATLANTA (44-2386)****1/23/76**  
(Date)**FROM: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)****MURKIN**Re urtelecall of 1/22/76 and urteletype dated 1/22/76**1. ITEMS ENCLOSED PREPARED BY EXHIBITS SECTION, ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION:**~~One revised artist's conception drawing~~**2. ACTION TO BE TAKEN:**

- A. Have witness(es) view item(s) for evaluation.
- B. If modification is necessary, submit additional information and any pertinent comments of witness(es) to Exhibits Section, Administrative Division.
- C. When likeness is approved by witness(es) any extra copies needed should be made or obtained locally. If local copying facilities are not available additional copies may be requested from Exhibits Section.
- D. As the case progresses, advise Exhibits Section re use and effectiveness of item(s) as investigative aid(s). Upon apprehension of subject(s), submit arrest photographs(s).

Enc. **Three photocopies of drawing also being sent to you by routing slip.**

(Do not type below this line.)

**1 - General Investigative Division (Mr. Helterhoff) (Enc.) (Sent Direct)****GPN/ml**  
**(3)**MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐



RALPH (Last Name Unknown)  
as described by LEON OWEN POWELL



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 29 1976

TELETYPE

✓ Gen. Inv

*Peel*  
*pr*

*Hester*

NR005 AT PLAIN

4:38 PM NITEL 1-22-76 LMMT

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION. ATTENTION EXHIBITS SECTION.

MURKIN.

RE BUREAU TELCALL TO ATLANTA, JANUARY 22, 1976

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BUREAU, LEON OWEN POWELL ADVISED THAT THE ARTIST'S CONCEPTION SHOULD BE CHANGED TO ELIMINATE SOME OF THE GRAY AROUND TEMPLES AND THE FACE SHOULD BE MADE SHORTER. POWELL STATED ONLY SPECKS OF GRAY SHOULD APPEAR ON TEMPLES AND THE FACE IN THE PRESENT ARTIST'S CONCEPTION IS A LITTLE TOO LONG. POWELL STATED HAS NO IDEA AS TO WHERE EDWARD POWELL WORKS OR RESIDES.

INVESTIGATION AT TOCCOA CONTINUING AND REPORT WILL FOLLOW.

POWELL BROTHERS, LEON AND CLAUDE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END.

HOLD

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0 - Exhibits & Dru 6



NR212 AT PLAIN

11:45 PM NITEL 1-22-76 HLF

TO: DIRECTOR

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2326)

MURKIN.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 29 1976

TELETYPE

*McC Rosfigh*

MRS. HEPSIE POWELL AND HUBERT POWELL, MOTHER AND BROTHER OF LEON AND CLAUDE POWELL, JR., LOCATED AND INTERVIEWED AT TOCCOA, GEORGIA. MRS. HEPSIE POWELL STATED SHE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE, WHATSOEVER OF INCIDENT AS REPORTED BY LEON POWELL TO ATLANTA DIVISION. HUBERT POWELL ADVISED HE WAS CONTACTED BY LEON POWELL AFTER BUREAU AGENTS CONTACTED ANOTHER BROTHER, WENDELL POWELL, BELMONT, NORTH CAROLINA. HUBERT POWELL FURTHER ADVISED THAT LEON RELATED TO HIM, AT THAT TIME, ABOUT THE INCIDENT. HUBERT POWELL OF THE OPINION LEON POWELL WAS DRUNK DURING THIS PHONE CALL. HUBERT POWELL STATED HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF INCIDENT BEFORE THE RECENT PHONE CALL.

END.

PLS ACK FOR TWO

HOLD FOR FOUR

DLA FBIHQ

ACK FOR TWO

**CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE**

*O - Peel man*

Mr. Gallagher

1/21/76

J. S. Poolman

MURKIN

1 - Mr. Callahan  
1 - Mr. Adams  
1 - Mr. Gallagher  
1 - Mr. O'Connell  
1 - Mr. Poolman  
1 - Mr. Helterhoff  
1 - Mr. Moore  
1 - Mr. Wannell  
1 - Mr. Cochran  
(Attn: Mr. Salog)

PURPOSE: To advise of the status of the investigation recently instituted to resolve an allegation by Leon Owen Powell and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., that prior to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., they were offered payment to murder Dr. King.

BACKGROUND: This case pertains to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on 4/4/68. James Earl Ray pled guilty to this murder and presently is in local confinement.

You were advised in previous memoranda that we are conducting an investigation at the request of the Civil Rights Division (CRD), U. S. Department of Justice, to resolve a recent allegation (made in January, 1976) by Leon Owen Powell and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., that prior to the assassination of Dr. King, they were offered payment to murder Dr. King.

Leon Owen Powell claims he and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., while in an Atlanta bar in October - November, 1967, were approached by a mutual friend, Ray Godfrey, who asked the Powells if they were interested in making \$50,000. Godfrey told them he would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder King. Approximately one week later at the same bar, the Powells were approached by an individual named Ralph (last name unknown), who said "I guess you know why I'm here" and subsequently opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000. Powell said they told Ralph they needed time to think it over. Ralph replied "if your mind is not made up now, I can't do business with you." Powell said

44-38861

MMF:bmp (10)

CONTINUED - OVER



Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

Ralph never said the money being offered was to kill King. Powell states neither he nor his brother were involved in the murder of King.

Claude Powell, Jr., was interviewed and although he also claims a payment offer was made to kill King, his account differs somewhat from that of Leon Owen Powell. Claude Powell, Jr., states that three or four weeks prior to the murder of King, he and his brother, Leon, were seated in a booth in Pete's Bar in Atlanta. Ray Godfrey, a friend of Leon's, joined them in their booth and engaged in conversation with Leon. Claude paid no particular attention to what they were talking about. Godfrey then left the booth and approximately ten to fifteen minutes later, an unknown subject (unsub), a white male, joined them in their booth and placed an expensive-looking briefcase on the table. The unsub told them he wanted them to kill King and would pay \$25,000 now and \$25,000 when the job was done. The unsub then opened his briefcase, which was full of wrapped currency. Claude stated he was shocked, assumed it was some sort of a joke and he ignored the unsub. The unsub then closed his briefcase and departed.

Ray Godfrey has been fully identified as Arnold Ray Godfrey and has advised that he did not talk with either of the Powells re the assassination of King nor did he introduce anyone to them re the assassination of King. He denied all knowledge of any assassination plot re King.

The CRD requested that Bureau polygraph examinations be afforded to the Powells and to Godfrey to attempt to resolve this allegation.

DETAILS: Leon Owen Powell was scheduled to appear at our Atlanta Office on 1/19/76 to submit to a polygraph examination. On 1/19/76, Powell telephonically contacted the Atlanta Office advising he was sick and desired to postpone the polygraph examination until the week of January 26, 1976. Powell was tentatively rescheduled to take the polygraph on 1/26/76 or 1/27/76.



Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

On 1/19/76, Claude Powell, Jr., was afforded a Bureau polygraph examination at Midland, Texas. The polygraph examiner concluded that Claude Powell's response to certain questions indicated he is "truthtelling" in stating someone did, in fact, offer him and his brother \$50,000 to kill Dr. King. Claude Powell's response to another question and his reactions following the answer indicate he has possible knowledge regarding the unidentified person who made the payment offer.

When Arnold Ray Godfrey was interviewed on 1/13/76, and denied any involvement in this matter, he agreed to submit to a polygraph. When he was contacted on 1/16/76, however, Godfrey stated "I am innocent" and then advised he did not wish to take any polygraph examination and did not wish to talk to the FBI any further. He stated if the FBI needs any further information, they should contact his attorney.

The results of our investigation have been closely coordinated with the CRD. On 1/20/76, Mr. Robert A. Murphy, Chief, Criminal Section, CRD, stated he desired to know the results of the polygraph examination of Leon Owen Powell (tentatively scheduled for 1/26 or 1/27/76) before making a determination as to whether Godfrey's attorney should be contacted concerning his polygraph examination, and before making a determination as to what additional investigation should be conducted to resolve this allegation.

ACTION: For information. You will be advised of any pertinent developments.

Civil Rights Division

January 21, 1976  
ATTN: MR. ROBERT A. MURPHY

ASSASSINATION OF  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

my

January 16, 1976

B. x HNH:mlr

4  
NOTE: Enclosed are copies of Atlanta teletypes dated 1/16/76, 1/19/76, and 1/20/76, and a copy of a San Antonio teletype dated 1/20/76.

Reference is made to conversations between Departmental Attorney Robert A. Murphy and SA Hal N. Helterhoff re the status of this investigation. On 1/20/76 Mr. Murphy stated he desired to know of the results of the polygraph examination of Leon Owen Powell (tentatively scheduled for 1/26/76 or 1/27/76) before making a determination as to whether Arnold Ray Godfrey's

**Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights Division**

**attorney should be contacted concerning his polygraph examination and before making a determination as to what additional investigation should be conducted to resolve this allegation.**



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 20 1976

TELETYPE

NR007 SA PLAIN

10:03PM NITEL JANUARY 20, 1976 LPP

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861)  
ATLANTA (44-2386)  
EL PASO (44-920) MEMPHIS  
FROM SAN ANTONIO (44-1242) (RUC)  
MURKIN.

REBUTEL TO ATLANTA, JANUARY 19, 1976, AUTHORIZING REINTERVIEW  
OF CLAUDE POWELL, JR., WITH USE OF POLYGRAPH.

ON JANUARY 19, 1976, AT 8:15 P.M., CLAUDE POWELL, JR.,  
AFFORDED POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION AT MIDLAND, TEXAS, BY SA LOREN K.  
LEE (SAN ANTONIO) WHO WAS UNASSISTED IN COLLATERAL INTERVIEW.

POWELL'S "YES" RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS, "DID SOMEONE OFFER  
YOU AND LEON \$50,000 TO KILL MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.?" AND  
"DID SOMEONE ASK YOU TO KILL MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.?" WERE  
LESS THAN RESPONSES TO CONTROL QUESTION, INDICATING POWELL IS  
TRUTHTELLING IN STATING SOMEONE DID, IN FACT, OFFER HIM AND HIS  
BROTHER \$50,000 TO KILL MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. POWELL'S "NO"  
RESPONSE TO QUESTION, "DO YOU KNOW WHO ASKED YOU AND LEON TO  
KILL MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.?" AND HIS REACTIONS FOLLOWING THE  
ANSWER INDICATE POSSIBLE KNOWLEDGE REGARDING UNIDENTIFIED PERSON  
MENTIONED IN ABOVE QUESTIONS.

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE



PAGE 2 SA 44-1242

SUBJECT POWELL WAS LEFT WITH IMPRESSION THAT RESULTS OF POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION WERE UNCLEAR AND THAT STRONG POSSIBILITY EXISTED WHEREIN FBI WOULD REQUEST ADDITIONAL TEST IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. RESULTS OF TEST WERE NOT DISCUSSED IN ANY WAY WITH POWELL NOR WAS INTERROGATION EFFECTED.

BUREAU REQUESTED TO FURNISH COPY OF THIS COMMUNICATION TO BUREAU FILE 80-5.

E N D.....

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 20 1976  
*RW*  
TELETYPE

NR009 AT PLAIN

2:40 PM NITEL 1-20-76 LMM

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

MEMPHIS

EL PASO (44-920)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

MURKIN.

RE ATLANTA NITEL TO THE BUREAU, JANUARY 19, 1976.

LEON OWEN POWELL WAS SCHEDULED TO APPEAR IN THE ATLANTA OFFICE OF THE FBI TO TAKE A POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION SOMETIME BETWEEN 3:00 PM AND 7:00 PM ON JANUARY 19, 1976. APPROXIMATELY 7:00 PM, POWELL TELEPHONICALLY CONTACTED THE ATLANTA OFFICE, ADVISING HE WAS "SICK" AND THAT HE DESIRED TO POSTPONE THE POLYGRAPH EXAM UNTIL THE WEEK OF JANUARY 26 THROUGH 30, 1976.

POWELL WAS TENTATIVELY RESCHEDULED TO TAKE THE POLYGRAPH EXAM ON JANUARY 26 OR JANUARY 27, 1976.

UACB, ATLANTA DIVISION WILL SUBMIT NO FURTHER TELETYPES IN THIS MATTER UNTIL POWELL IS POLYGRAPHED.

POWELL BROTHERS, LEON AND CLAUDE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END.

CMB ACK FBIHQ TU

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

NR010 AT PLAIN

2:44 PM NITEL 1-19-76 LMM

JAN 19 1976

TELETYPE

*pl. Don't  
Omy Robinson*

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

SAC, MEMPHIS

SAC, EL PASO (44-920)

FROM: SAC, ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

MURKIN

RE ATLANTA NITEL TO THE BUREAU DATED JANUARY 16, 1976.

ON JANUARY 16, 1976, A. RAY GODFREY WAS CONTACTED CONCERNING HIS WILLINGNESS TO SUBMIT TO A POLYGRAPH EXAMINE AT THE ATLANTA OFFICE OF THE FBI AT WHICH TIME GODFREY STATED "I AM INNOCENT" AND HE THEN ADVISED THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO TAKE ANY POLYGRAPH EXAMINE AND HE STATED HE DID NOT WISH TO TALK TO THE FBI ANY FURTHER AND IF THE FBI NEEDS ANY FURTHER INFORMATION THEY SHOULD CONTACT HIS ATTORNEY, JACK V. DORSEY, AT TELEPHONE NUMBERS 633-9607 OR 934-8921.

ON THE SAME DATE, LEON OWEN POWELL ADVISED THAT HE IS WILLING TO TAKE A POLYGRAPH EXAMINE AND STATED THAT HE WOULD BE AT THE ATLANTA OFFICE OF THE FBI SOMETIME BETWEEN 3:00 AND 7:00 P.M. ON JANUARY 19, 1976, FOR THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINE.

UACB, ATLANTA DIVISION WILL NOT CONTACT ARNOLD RAY GODFREY ANY FURTHER OR HIS ATTORNEY, JACK V. DORSEY.

END OF PAGE NUMBER ONE

**CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE**

PAGE NUMBER TWO

AT 44-2386

POWELL BROTHERS LEON AND CLAUDE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED  
POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END

CMB FBIHQ CLR TU

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 17 1976

TELETYPE

NR012 ME PLAIN

11:50 PM NITEL JANUARY 16, 1976 JMB

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

ATLANTA (44-2386)

EL PASO (44-920)

FROM: MEMPHIS (44-1987) (P)

MURKIN

INDICES OF THE MEMPHIS OFFICE CONTAIN NOTHING WHICH  
WOULD LINK CLAUDE POWELL, LEON POWELL, RAY GODFREY, OR ANY  
OF THE POWELL RELATIVES TO THE MURKIN INVESTIGATION.

NO FURTHER ACTION BEING TAKEN AT MEMPHIS.

END

PLS HOLD

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 18 1976

TELETYPE

NR020 AT PLAIN

8:23 PM URGENT 1-16-76 HLF

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

MEMPHIS

EL PASO (44-920)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

MURKIN.

RE ATLANTA TELETYPE TO THE BUREAU, JANUARY 15, 1976.

ON INSTANT DATE, DOTTIE UNDERHILL, WAITRESS AT MC KINNON'S RESTAURANT, MORELAND AVENUE, ADVISED SHE HAS NEVER WORKED AT ANY OTHER ESTABLISHMENT ON MORELAND AVENUE. SHE HAS NEVER BEEN EMPLOYED AT ANY LOUNGE CALLED "PETE'S PLACE", NOR IS SHE FAMILIAR WITH THE NAME PETE DAVIS. DAVID MC KINNON, SON OF OWNER, ADVISED HIS FATHER HAS EMPLOYED NUMEROUS WAITRESSES, SOME OF WHOM EVEN SUPPLY PHONY NAMES. HE HAS WORKED FOR HIS FATHER FOR THE LAST EIGHTEEN YEARS. HE CANNOT RECALL ANY OTHER WAITRESS NAMED "DOTTIE" OTHER THAN THE ONE WHO IS EMPLOYED NOW.

ATLANTA. WILL, ASAP, MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO HAVE A. RAY GODFREY AND LEON POWELL AFFORDED POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION.

POWELL BROTHERS, LEON AND CLAUDE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END.

PLS HOLD

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 16 1976

TELETYPE

*Handwritten:*  
A. [unclear]  
on [unclear]

NR 004 EP PLAIN

4:55PM URGENT JANUARY 16, 1976 SMC

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861) SAN ANTONIO  
FROM EL PASO (44-920) (P)

MURKIN.

RE BUREAU TELETYPE TO EL PASO, JANUARY 16, 1976, AND  
MIDLAND RESIDENT AGENCY TELEPHONE CALL TO SAN ANTONIO,  
JANUARY 16, 1976.

POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION FOR CLAUDE POWELL, JR.,  
COORDINATED WITH SA LOREN K. LEE, SAN ANTONIO DIVISION,  
FOR JANUARY 19, 1976, 8:00P.M., MIDLAND, TEXAS. NECESSARY  
WAIVER FOR POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION OBTAINED FROM POWELL.

EL PASO WILL SUTEL RESULTS OF THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION.

ATLANTA (44-2386) AND MEMPHIS ADVISED AIRMAIL.

END.EMS

EMS FBIHQ

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE



Civil Rights Division

1/16/76

ATTENTION: MR. ROBERT A. MURPHY

ASSASSINATION OF  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

my

1/14/76

xx

*[Handwritten signature]*

4

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO...

NOTE: Reference is made to conversations between Departmental Attorney Robert A. Murphy and SA H. N. Helterhoff re the status of this investigation. Enclosed are copies of Atlanta teletypes, both dated 1/15/76, and a copy of a Charlotte teletype dated 1/14/76. Also enclosed is an FBI Identification Record for Arnold Ray Godfrey.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE 1-14-76 807 MLH  
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
 IDENTIFICATION DIVISION  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20537

None Assigned

The following FBI record, NUMBER , is furnished FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.  
 Information shown on this Identification Record represents data furnished FBI by fingerprint contributors.  
 WHERE DISPOSITION IS NOT SHOWN OR FURTHER EXPLANATION OF CHARGE OR DISPOSITION IS  
 DESIRED, COMMUNICATE WITH AGENCY CONTRIBUTING THOSE FINGERPRINTS.

CONTRIBUTOR OF FINGERPRINTS	NAME AND NUMBER	ARRESTED OR RECEIVED	CHARGE	DISPOSITION
PD Forest Park GA	Arnold Ray Godfrey 13110	3-7-64	D/C drunk D/C cursing driving wrong side of road suspicion poss dangerous drugs	
Since neither fingerprints nor an identifying number which is indexed in FBI files, you are requested to inform the agency that this record contains the individual in whom you are interested.				



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
IDENTIFICATION DIVISION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20537

1-14-76 807 MLH

2

The following information from FBI record, NUMBER  
is furnished FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

None Assigned

Description and Related Data: ARNOLD RAY GODFREY

Race: W

Sex: M

Height: 74"

Weight: 184

Hair: Brn

Eyes: Brn

Date and Place of Birth: 6-11-30 Cooperhill TN

Scars and Marks: Scar R/F arm 2"

Address: In 1964 569 Greham Ave Atlanta GA

Occupation: Construction

Social Security Number: Unknown

Since neither fingerprints nor an  
identifying number which is indexed  
in our files accompanied your request,  
FBI cannot guarantee in any manner  
that the material concerns the  
individual in whom you are interested.



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 15 1976

TELETYPE

*Handwritten:*  
m. c. kinnon  
on Peelma

NR012 AT PLAIN

8:30 PM URGENT 1-15-76 HLF

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

MEMPHIS

EL PASO (44-920)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

MURKIN.

RE ATLANTA TELETYPE TO THE BUREAU, JANUARY 15, 1976.

ON INSTANT DATE, EDNA MC KINNON, OWNER OF MC KINNON'S RESTAURANT, MORELAND AVENUE, ADVISED SHE DOES HAVE EMPLOYED AN EMPLOYEE NAMED "DOTTIE". "DOTTIE" DID WORK FOR HER WHEN SHE OWNED THE PIGLET RESTAURANT LOCATED AT HILL AND MORELAND, ATLANTA, GEORGIA. "DOTTIE" HAD THE DAY OFF AND IS CURRENTLY OUT OF TOWN, SHE WILL BE BACK AND REPORT FOR WORK AT 2:00 PM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1976.

DIANE BRADY RECONTACTED, ADVISED ALL OTHER EMPLOYEES OF PETE'S PLACE HAVE DIED SINCE PETE'S PLACE WAS CLOSED. AS FAR AS SHE CAN REMEMBER, THE ONLY INDIVIDUALS STILL LIVING THAT WERE CONNECTED WITH PETE'S PLACE ARE HERSELF, "DOTTIE", AND RAY GODFREY. A LOT OF THE CUSTOMERS ARE STILL AROUND AND FREQUENT HER BAR, "THE OFFICE".

END PAGE ONE.

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE



PAGE TWO (44-2386)

ATLANTA AT ATLANTA. WILL LOCATE AND INTERVIEW "DOTTIE"  
AT MC KINNON'S RESTAURANT.

POWELL BROTHERS, LEON AND CLAUDE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED  
POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END.

PLS HOLD



NR082 AT PLAIN

12:08 AM URGENT 1-15-76 HLF

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

SAC, MEMPHIS

SAC, EL PASO

FROM: SAC, ATLANTA (44-2638) (P)

MURKIN.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 15 1976

TELETYPE

*Mc Powell*

RE AT TEL TO BU, JAN. 13, 1976.

ON INSTANT DATE, DIANE BRADY, WHITE FEMALE, DOB AUG. 22, 1942, POB ATLANTA, GA., CURRENT OWNER OF THE OFFICE LOUNGE, INTERVIEWED AND ADVISED SHE IS QUITE CERTAIN THAT IN 1967 SHE WAS EMPLOYED AS A CARHOP AND BARTENDER AT PETE'S PLACE ON MORELAND AVE. SHE IS FAMILIAR WITH RAY GODFREY AND AFTER VIEWING PHOTO OF CLAUDE AND LEON POWELL, WAS FAMILIAR WITH BOTH OF THEM. SHE STATED SHE NEVER HEARD ANYONE TALKING ABOUT ANY MURDER OF ANY TYPE AT PETE'S PLACE. SHE WAS UNABLE TO IDENTIFY ANYONE RESEMBLING ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF RALPH (LNU). SHE CAN ONLY DESCRIBE ONE INDIVIDUAL WHO CAME INTO PETE'S PLACE WHO WAS WELL-DRESSED AND WALKED WITH A LIMP. SHE KNEW THE INDIVIDUAL AS "DUKE". "DUKE" WAS A WHITE MALE, APPROXIMATELY 6', 180 LBS., DARK HAIR, WALKED WITH A LIMP, DROVE A LARGE DARK CAR WITH A GWINNETT COUNTY TAG. "DUKE"

END PAGE ONE

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE

*O - Pullman*

PAGE TWO, AT 44-2638

ALWAYS SEEMED TO HAVE MONEY, IN FACT, GAVE HER \$50 TIP. SHE CANNOT LOCATE DUKE AT THIS TIME, IN FACT, HAS BEEN TRYING TO FIND HIM ON HER OWN. DUKE VERY RARELY WENT INTO BAR, ALWAYS GOT HIS BEVERAGES THROUGH THE CARHOPS. DIANE ADVISED ANOTHER CARHOP NAMED DOTTIE (LNU), WHO SHE THINKS IS CURRENTLY WORKING FOR BARBARA'S LOUNGE ON MORELAND AVE., MIGHT BE ABLE TO ASSIST IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE ARTIST'S CONCEPTION IN VIEW OF FACT SHE WAS A LONG-TIME EMPLOYEE OF PETE'S PLACE.

LEON POWELL REINTERVIEWED AND SHOWN ARTIST'S CONCEPTION. TO THE BEST OF HIS RECOLLECTION, WITH SOME MINOR COSMETIC CHANGES, CONCEPTION RESEMBLES INDIVIDUAL WHO CONTACTED HIM RE ASSASSINATION. POWELL IS CERTAIN INDIVIDUAL WHO CONTACTED HIM KNOWN AS RALPH DID NOT, REPEAT DID NOT, WALK WITH LIMP.

ATLANTA AT ATLANTA. LOCATE AND INTERVIEW DOTTIE (LNU) AND SHOW ARTIST'S CONCEPTION.

END.

FLS HOLD

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

NR017 CE CODE

10:02PM NITEL JANUARY 14, 1976 JDC

JAN 14 1976

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

TELETYPE

ATLANTA (44-2386)

EL PASO

MEMPHIS

FROM: CHARLOTTE (44-1365)

MURKIN.

RE CHARLOTTE TELETYPE TO THE BUREAU, DATED JANUARY 8, 1976.

FLOYCE POWELL BRYSON, ROUTE NUMBER FIVE, BOX 180,  
FRANKLIN, N. C., INTERVIEWED ON JANUARY 14, 1976, AND ADVISED  
AS FOLLOWS:

LEON AND CLAUDE POWELL ARE BRYSON'S BROTHERS AND ALTHOUGH  
THEY ARE BOTH MORALLY GOOD MEN THEY EACH HAVE A DRINKING  
PROBLEM. NEITHER LEON NOR CLAUDE HAS EVER BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE KU KLUX KLAN OR ANY BLACK HATE ORGANIZATIONS. LIKEWISE,  
NEITHER HAS EVER SPOKEN AGAINST MARTIN LUTHER KING.

BRYSON'S BROTHERS HAVE NEVER MENTIONED TO HER THE ALLEGED  
OFFER TO KILL KING AND BRYSON QUITE FRANKLY DOES NOT BELIEVE  
THE EVENT EVER OCCURRED. ALSO, NEITHER POSSESSES THE CAPABILITY  
TO KILL KING.

LEON POWELL WAS A KOREAN WAR VETERAN AND WHENEVER HE

O - Prelman

CARBON COPY DO NOT FILE



PAGE TWO CE 44-1365

DRINKS TO EXCESS HE BECOMES DEPRESSED AND OFTEN CALLS MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT FOR CONSOLATION. LEON OFTEN STATES HE WISHES HE WERE DEAD LIKE THE REST OF THE BOYS IN HIS UNIT WHO WERE KILLED IN KOREA. BRYSON BELIEVES LEON'S EXPERIENCES IN KOREA HAVE ADVERSELY AFFECTED HIS MIND. LAST CALL WAS MADE BY LEON TO BRYSON SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.

LEON LAST SEEN BY BRYSON DURING CHRISTMAS, 1975, AND ALL APPEARED WELL.

BRYSON PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING LIST OF HER BROTHERS:

WENDELL POWELL, BELMONT, N. C.

CLAUDE POWELL, JR., CHAMBE LANE, DEKATUR, GA.

EDWARD POWELL, SHALLOWFORD, CHAMBLEE, GA.

HUBERT POWELL, ROUTE THREE, TACOA, GA.

LEON POWELL.

ATLANTA, HANDLE INTERVIEWS OF FAMILY.

TELETYPE FURNISHED EL PASO AND MEMPHIS PER REQUEST.

END.

HOLD

Mr. Gallagher

1/14/76

J. S. Peelman

MURKIN

1 - Mr. Callahan  
1 - Mr. Adams  
1 - Mr. Gallagher  
1 - Mr. O'Connell  
1 - Mr. Peelman  
① - Mr. Helterhoff  
1 - Mr. Moore  
1 - Mr. Wannall  
1 - Mr. Walsh  
1 - Mr. Cochran  
(Attn: Mr. Balog)

**PURPOSE:** To advise of the status of the investigation instituted to resolve an allegation by Leon Owen Powell that he and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., were offered payment in 1967 to murder Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**BACKGROUND:** This case pertains to the shooting death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on 4/4/68. James Earl Ray pled guilty to this murder and presently is in local confinement.

You were previously advised in a J. S. Peelman memorandum to Mr. Gallagher, dated 1/6/76, that by teletype dated 1/3/76, our Atlanta Office advised of information furnished by one Leon Owen Powell who, in essence, claims he and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., while in an Atlanta bar in October - November, 1967, were approached by a mutual friend, Ray Godfrey, who asked the Powells if they were interested in making \$50,000. Godfrey told them he would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder King. Approximately one week later at the same bar, the Powells were approached by an individual named Ralph (Last name unknown), who said "I guess you know why I'm here" and subsequently opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000. Powell said they told Ralph they needed time to think it over. Ralph replied "if your mind is not made up now, I can't do business with you." Powell said Ralph never said the money being offered was to kill King. Powell states neither he nor his brother were involved in the murder of King.

44-38861

MMH:bap (11)

CONTINUED - OVER



Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

Leon Owen Powell also stated that the only other individuals aware of this meeting with Ralph (LNU) were his former wife, Annie Lois Compos and Pete Davis, owner of the bar.

The Civil Rights Division (CRD), U. S. Department of Justice, requested investigation to resolve this allegation.

DETAILS: Claude Powell, Jr., was interviewed and although he also claims a payment offer was made to kill King, his account differs somewhat from that of Leon Owen Powell. Claude Powell, Jr., states that three or four weeks prior to the murder of King, he and his brother, Leon, were seated in a booth in Pete's Bar in Atlanta. Ray Godfrey, a friend of Leon's, joined them in their booth and engaged in conversation with Leon. Claude paid no particular attention to what they were talking about. Godfrey then left the booth and approximately ten to fifteen minutes later, an unknown subject (unsub), a white male, joined them in their booth and placed an expensive-looking briefcase on the table. The unsub told them he wanted them to kill King and would pay \$25,000 now and \$25,000 when the job was done. The unsub then opened his briefcase, which was full of wrapped currency. Claude stated he was shocked, assumed it was some sort of a joke and he ignored the unsub. The unsub then closed his briefcase and departed.

Wendell Sutton Powell, a brother, stated he had not heard of anyone contacting his brothers re offering them money to assassinate King. He advised if Claude had seen \$25,000 in one lump sum, Claude would have told others about it. He advised that Claude used to drink a lot and talk glibly when in a drunken condition.

Leon Owen Powell has furnished information for the preparation of an artist's conception of the unsub who reportedly made the payment offer. Claude Powell, Jr., states he would not recognize the unsub and was unable to furnish information for an artist's conception.

Annie Lois Compos, former wife of Leon Owen Powell, after some prompting, remembered an incident wherein Leon told her an individual had contacted his brother and him regarding the murder of King. Leon told her that the man had a suitcase



Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

full of money and wanted them to murder King. She stated Leon was very intoxicated when relating the story to her after the King assassination. She stated that numerous times while Leon was drunk, he would talk about various killings and killers.

Investigation determined that Pete Davis, the owner and operator of the bar, died of cancer in May of 1975.

Ray Godfrey has been fully identified as Arnold Ray Godfrey and has advised that he did not talk with either of the Powells re the assassination of King nor did he introduce anyone to them re the assassination of King. He denied all knowledge of any assassination plot re King.

The results of our investigation have been closely coordinated with the CRD and on 1/14/76, Mr. Robert A. Murphy, Chief, Criminal Section, CRD, requested that polygraph examinations be afforded to Leon Owen Powell, Claude Powell, Jr., and Arnold Ray Godfrey, in an attempt to further resolve this matter. This request from Mr. Murphy has been confirmed in writing.

By separate communication, Atlanta is being instructed to have SA John A. Reynolds, Bureau-approved polygraph examiner, afford the requested polygraph examinations to Leon Owen Powell and Arnold Ray Godfrey. SA Loren E. Lee, Bureau-approved polygraph examiner, San Antonio Division, is also being instructed to afford the requested polygraph examination to Claude Powell, Jr., presently in the El Paso Division, since our El Paso Office does not have a Bureau-approved polygraph examiner. This coordinated with Laboratory Division.

ACTION: For information. You will be advised of any pertinent developments.

PLAINTEXT

TELETYPE

URGENT

TO SACS ATLANTA (44-2386)

1/14/76

EL PASO (44-920)

SAN ANTONIO

FROM DIRECTOR FBI (44-38861)

1 - Mr. Peelman  
1 - Mr. Helterhoff  
1 - Mr. Cochran  
(Attn: Mr. Balog)

MURKIN

REBUTELCALLS JANUARY 14, 1976.

CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION (CRD), U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, HAS REQUESTED THAT POLYGRAPH EXAMINATIONS BE AFFORDED TO LEON OWEN POWELL, CLAUDE POWELL, JR., AND ARNOLD RAY GODFREY.

ATLANTA, HAVE SA JOHN B. REYNOLDS, BUREAU-APPROVED POLYGRAPH EXAMINER, AFFORD POLYGRAPH EXAMINATIONS TO LEON OWEN POWELL AND ARNOLD RAY GODFREY. OBTAIN NECESSARY WAIVERS.

EL PASO, COORDINATE POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION FOR CLAUDE POWELL, JR. SA LOREN K. LEE, BUREAU-APPROVED POLYGRAPH EXAMINER, SAN ANTONIO DIVISION, IS INSTRUCTED TO AFFORD THIS POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION. EL PASO CONTACT CLAUDE  
1 - MEMPHIS (44-2987)

HNH:bap (6)

SEE NOTE PAGE 3...