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NO 157-10673
PJD:njc

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent PATRICK J. DENTE at New Orleans International Airport, Kenner, Louisiana:

Mr. ROBERT SPEAKS, Supervisor, Ticket Counter, Delta Airlines, advised that seats on Delta Flight Number 106 for April 5 and 6, 1968, are assigned according to the customer's preference and availability prior to boarding the craft; however, no record is maintained by the airline as to particular seat assignment. He explained that the customer chooses a seat number from a chart of the aircraft when checking in prior to departure, and this seat number is placed on the customer's ticket folder.

Mr. SPEAKS furnished a copy of the manifest for the above flights, indicating passengers who boarded these flights at New Orleans International Airport. A review of these manifests failed to reveal the subject under his true name or known aliases as being a passenger on either of these flights.

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DPM:jah

DELTA AIRLINES FLIGHT 106
ON APRIL 5 AND 6, 1968

The following investigation was conducted by
SA DANIEL P. MC LAUGHLIN at New Orleans, Louisiana, on
April 23, 1968:

ROBERT CAMERON, Flight Schedules, Delta Airlines,
New Orleans, advised as follows:

The following is the list of crew members, including
stewardesses, on Flight 106 on April 5, 1968:

D. T. MOHRMANN, Captain, 1621 Green Acres Road,
Metairie, Louisiana

S. JURGELSKY, First Officer, 6200 Rosalie Court,
Metairie, Louisiana

B. W. COSTILOW, Flight Engineer, 1601 Vegas Drive,
Metairie, Louisiana

LENEA BAKER, 928 Dumaine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana,
Stewardess

MAY FORD, Stewardess, 6805 Veterans Highway, Metairie,
Louisiana

MOLLY NELSON, Stewardess, 626 Esplanade Avenue, New
Orleans, Louisiana

ISABEL SHEPHERD, Stewardess, 6901 Veterans Highway,
Metairie, Louisiana

He advised that the following is the list of crew
members including stewardesses, of Delta Airlines Flight 106,
on April 6, 1968:

J. H. HARKMESS, Captain, 3612 Cleveland Drive,
Metairie, Louisiana

R. F. LOWERY, First Officer, 4753 Yale Street,
Metairie, Louisiana

J. UNVERZAGT, Flight Engineer, 2005 Illinois Street,
Kenner, Louisiana

JAN HERSCHEDE, Stewardess, 6901 Veterans Highway,
Metairie, Louisiana

PHYLLIS TATE, Stewardess, 930 Bourbon Street, New
Orleans, Louisiana

SANDRA SULLIVAN, Stewardess, 6805 Veterans Highway,
Metairie, Louisiana

RITA REHKOFF, Stewardess, 6805 Veterans Highway,
Metairie, Louisiana

He stated that the following were working the flight
and would not be home until later this evening or on April 24,
1968:

JAN HERSCHEDE, SANDRA SULLIVAN, J. H. PEART, and
MAY FORD

BOBBY W. CUSTLOW, 1601 Vegas Drive, Metairie,
Louisiana, advised as follows:

He was flight engineer for Delta Airlines Flight 106
on April 5, 1968. He was exhibited several photographs of JAMES
EARL RAY and advised that he has not seen this man before.

ISABEL SHEPHERD, 6901 Veterans Highway, Metairie,
Louisiana, advised as follows:

She was a stewardess aboard Delta Airlines Flight
106 on April 5, 1968. She was exhibited several photographs of

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JAMES EARL RAY and advised she has not seen this man before.

JAMES H. HARKMESS, 3612 Cleveland Drive, Metairie, Louisiana, advised as follows:

He was captain of Delta Airlines Flight 106 on April 6, 1968. He was exhibited several photographs of JAMES EARL RAY and advised that he has not seen this man before.

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The following investigation was conducted by
SA DANIEL P. MC LAUGHLIN on April 23, 1968:

RE: DELTA AIRLINES FLIGHT 106 ON APRIL 6, 1968

RITA REHKOPF, 6805 Veterans Highway, Metairie,
Louisiana, advised as follows:

She was a stewardess aboard Delta Flight 106
on April 6, 1968. She was exhibited a photograph of
JAMES EARL RAY and advised that he appears similar to a
passenger who sat in the last three rows on the right as
one faces the front of the plane. She said this flight
originated in New Orleans and was en route to Frankfurt,
Germany, with stops at Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington,
D.C. She said that she does not remember where this person
got off the plane but she thinks he boarded the plane in
New Orleans. She described this man as follows:

Race	White
Sex	Male
Age	40-42 years old
Height	5' 11"
Weight	180 pounds
Build	Medium
Complexion	Medium
Hair	Dark; slightly curly, combed back
Clothing	Wearing casual clothes
Appearance	Dirty.

She said she is unable to further describe this
individual.

The following investigation was conducted by
SAs DANIEL P. MC LAUGHLIN and PATRICK J. DENTE on April
23, 1968:

RE: DELTA FLIGHT 106 ON APRIL 6, 1968

ROBERT R. LOWRY, 4753 Yale Street, Metairie,
Louisiana, advised as follows:

He was co-pilot of Delta Flight 106 on April 6,
1968. He was exhibited a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and

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he advised that he has never seen this person before other than his photograph in the newspapers.

PHYLLIS TATE, 700 St. Philip Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, advised as follows:

She was a stewardess on Delta Flight 106 on April 6, 1968.

She was exhibited a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and she advised that she has never seen this person before.

JANET HERSCHEDE, 6901 Veterans Highway, Metairie, Louisiana, was unavailable for interview.

SANDRA SULLIVAN, 6805 Veterans Highway, Metairie, Louisiana, was unavailable for interview.

RE: DELTA AIRLINES FLIGHT 106 on APRIL 5, 1968

D. T. MOHRMANN, 1621 Green Acres Road, Metairie, Louisiana, advised as follows:

He was Captain of Delta Flight 106 on April 5, 1968. He was exhibited a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and he stated that he never saw this person before except that he recalls seeing his photograph in the newspapers.

STANLEY JURGELSHY, 6200 Rosalie Court, Metairie, Louisiana, advised as follows:

He was co-pilot of Delta Flight 106 on April 5, 1968. He was exhibited a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and advised that he never saw this person before except that he recalls seeing his photograph in the newspapers.

MOLLY NELSON, 626 Esplanade Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, advised as follows:

She was a stewardess on Delta Flight 106 on April 5, 1968. She was exhibited a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and advised that she has never seen this person before.

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LANEA BAKER, 928 Dumaine Street, New Orleans,
Louisiana, was unavailable for interview.

MAY FORD, 6805 Veterans Highway, Metairie,
Louisiana, was unavailable for interview.

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The following investigation was conducted at New Orleans International Airport at Kenner, Louisiana, on April 24, 1968 by SA PATRICK DENTE:

The following stewardesses of Delta Flight 106, of April 5, 1968, were shown five photographs, including one of the subject and could not identify the subject as being a passenger on that particular flight: Miss LANEA BAKER, Miss MAY FORD.

Mr. JOHN G. UNVERZACT, crew member, Delta Flight 106, April 6, 1968, was shown five photographs, including one of the subject, and was unable to identify the subject as any individual who was on board Flight 106.

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PJD:mjc

The following investigation was conducted at Metairie, Louisiana, on April 25, 1968; by Special Agent PATRICK J. DENTE:

The following stewardesses of Delta Airlines Flight 106 on April 6, 1968, were shown five photographs, including that of the subject, JAMES EARL RAY, which they could not identify as any individual they had observed on that flight:

Miss JAN HERSCHEDE, 6901 Veterans Memorial Highway;

Miss SANDRA SULLIVAN, 6805 Veterans Memorial Highway.

NO 157-10673 -epk

Re: Telephone Call to Lake Charles,
Louisiana, Telephone Number 318, 477-0616

On April 26, 1968, the Houston Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation provided information that a telephone call was made on the evening of December 17, 1967, from a pay telephone booth located in an area described by CHARLES STEIN to telephone number 318, 477-0616, Lake Charles, Louisiana.

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Date 4/26/681

Mrs. MARGIE GRIFFITH, Manager, Hertz Rent-A-Car, Municipal Airport, Lake Charles, Louisiana, advised she keeps a log of all incoming and outgoing telephone calls in her office. She advised of the following:

A review of her telephone log for the period December 15-17, 1967, failed to show any calls to or from Houston, Texas. It is possible that she or Mrs. PEGGY SYLVIA, who also worked in the office during the period of December 15-17, 1967, might have missed logging some calls. A review of records of her office for the period December 15-17, 1967, showed cars checked in and checked out of her office only to persons of local companies whom she knows. None of the cars checked in or out during this period were in the names of any strangers.

Mrs. GRIFFITH examined photographs of JAMES EARL RAY. She stated the photographs were not those of anyone to whom she had ever rented or had returned one of their cars.

Mrs. GRIFFITH added that the area telephone code for Lake Charles, Louisiana, is 318. She added that her company is the subscriber to Lake Charles telephone number 477-0616 and has had this number for over three years.

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On 4/26/68 at Lake Charles, Louisiana File # NO 157-10673

by SA GEORGE M. CAMPBELL - jah Date dictated 4/26/68

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Date 4/26/681

PEGGY SYLVIA, Assistant Manager, Hertz Rent-A-Car, Lake Charles Municipal Airport, was shown photos of JAMES EARL RAY.

She stated the photos were not familiar to her as being that of anyone to whom she has rented or who has returned a Hertz car to her.

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On 4/26/68 at Lake Charles, Louisiana File # NO 157-10673

by SA GEORGE M. CAMPBELL - jah Date dictated 4/26/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

Date 5/2/681

Mrs. MARGIE E. GRIFFITH, Manager, Hertz Rent-A-Car, Lake Charles Municipal Airport, advised her records show part-time employee BRENDA CONOVER, 208 West Spring Street, Lake Charles, was on duty at 7:49 PM, December 17, 1967. She stated BRENDA attends McNeese State College, Lake Charles, and is out of town on a school trip until the morning of May 2, 1968.

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On 4/30/68 at Lake Charles, Louisiana File # NO 157-10673
by SA GEORGE C. CAMPBELL/cst Date dictated 5/2/68

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Date 5/2/681

Miss BRENDA CONOVER, 208 West Spring Street, Lake Charles, Louisiana, advised she is employed part-time at the Hertz Rent-A-Car Office at Lake Charles Municipal Airport. She stated the manager checked the records and determined that she was working on the night of December 17, 1967.

She stated that she does not recall having received a telephone call from Houston, Texas, at 7:49 PM on December 17, 1967, and she checked the office telephone log and found that no such call was recorded on that date.

Miss CONOVER examined photographs of JAMES EARL RAY, FBI number 409 942G. She stated that the photographs did not look like anyone she has ever seen.

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On 5/2/68 at Lake Charles, Louisiana File # NO 157-10573

by SA GEORGE M. CAMPBELL/cst Date dictated 5/2/68

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NO 157-10673 -epk

Re Telephone Call from Yuma, Arizona,
December 15, 1967, to Shreveport, Louisiana,
telephone number 318, 746-9200

On April 29, 1968, the Phoenix Office of the FBI advised that on December 15, 1967, a telephone call had been made from a pay telephone at Yuma, Arizona, to Shreveport, Louisiana, telephone number 318, 746-9200.

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PAY PHONE CALL FROM YUMA,
ARIZONA, DECEMBER 15, 1967

The following investigation was conducted by SA's WILLIAM P. GREAVES and THURMAN P. KELLEY at Bossier City, Louisiana, on April 29, 1968:

A check of the current city directory for Bossier City, Louisiana, determined that phone number 746-9200 was listed to the Curtis Park Bar in Bossier City.

BIRDIE STRINGFELLOW, bartender, Curtis Park Bar, 2152 East Texas, was displayed a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and she advised that she had never seen this individual before. STRINGFELLOW stated that the phone number 746-9200 is the number of the pay phone located in the bar. She stated that she was not working at the bar during the period December 15, 1967, and that the manager would have to be contacted for the employees of that period.

GLADYS ULLRICH, owner, Curtis Park Bar, was displayed a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and she advised she had never seen this individual before. She stated that during the period December 15, 1967, she was working nights as a bartender THELMA RUSSELL. She stated she did not know the current address for RUSSELL but believed she was residing somewhere in Bossier City. ULLRICH advised that the day bartender during that time was a JERILE GARRETT who is currently residing at 833 Boston Road in Bossier City. She stated that the clientele of the bar consisted mainly of transients and that she would have no idea who might have received a call from Yuma, Arizona, on December 15, 1967. She stated that her husband, HANNO ULLRICH, also worked the bar on occasions and that he might have further information.

HANNO ULLRICH, owner, Curtis Park Bar, was displayed a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and advised he had never seen this individual before. He stated he had no idea who might have called the bar from Yuma, Arizona, on December 15, 1967. ULLRICH stated he did not know a current address for THELMA RUSSELL who was formerly the night bartender but that possibly ANN HULLAND who worked at the Bossier Bottle Shop might know a current address.

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ANN HULLAND, Bossier Bottle Shop, 1316 East Texas, advised that she was a steady customer at the Curtis Park Bar and that she knew THELMA RUSSELL. She stated RUSSELL was residing as of a week ago somewhere on MacArthur Drive in Bossier City. She stated she did not know the house number; however, RUSSELL drove an old gray colored Plymouth. A photograph of RAY was displayed to HULLAND and she stated she had never seen this person before.

LINDA BONNER, 616 MacArthur Drive, advised that she had resided at that address for several years and did not know THELMA RUSSELL.

MYRTIS FREEMAN, 708 MacArthur Drive, advised that she had been residing at that address for about 13 years, but she did not know a THELMA RUSSELL.

Several attempts were made to contact JERILE GARRETT at 833 Benton Road with negative results.

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WTG:cmp

TOLL TELEPHONE CALL FROM YUMA, ARIZONA, DECEMBER 15, 1967

The following investigation was conducted by
SAs WILLIAM T. GREAVES and THURMAN P. KELLEY at Bossier City,
Louisiana:

On April 30, 1968, JERILE JARRETT, 833 Benton Road, advised that she was the day bartender at the Curtis Park Bar in Bossier City, during the period of December 15, 1967. She was displayed a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and advised that she had never seen this individual before. She stated that the customers at the bar often answer the pay phone and that it could have been any number of persons that might have received the call from Yuma on December 15, 1967. She stated that she had never overheard anyone in the bar mention having acquaintances in Yuma, Arizona. JARRETT stated that in view of the fact that the phone call was received at the bar in the evening, that possibly the night bartender, THELMA RUSSELL might be able to provide information. She stated that she did not have an address for RUSSELL, but believed she lives somewhere on Benton Road.

After several contacts, THELMA RUSSELL was located at 1609 Benton Road and advised that she had received a telephone call from her boy friend on December 15, 1967, from Yuma, Arizona. She advised that he is a trucker and had carried a shipment to California and had stopped in Yuma to telephone her. RUSSELL stated that she did not recognize the photograph of JAMES EARL RAY as anyone that she had ever seen before.

NO 157-10673 --epk

Re: Call Made From Coin Telephone,
Alpine, Texas, on December 16, 1967,
to Telephone Number 938-5638,
Greenwood, Louisiana

On May 1, 1968, the Dallas Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation advised that on December 16, 1967, a telephone call had been made at 12:43 a.m., from a coin telephone located at Alpine, Texas, to telephone number 938-5638, Greenwood, Louisiana.

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The following investigation was conducted by
SA PATRICK R. COONEY, at Shreveport, Louisiana:

On May 2, 1968, a review of the current Shreveport, Louisiana, City Directory, revealed that R. L. HAMMETT and wife CATHERINE reside at Rural Route 2, Box 580, Greenwood, Louisiana. City directory shows HAMMETT's employment as Service Dispatcher for Southwestern Electric Power Company, Shreveport, Louisiana.

The records of the Bureau of Identification of the Shreveport, Louisiana, Police Department contain no record of R. L. HAMMETT.

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 5/2/68

R. L. HAMMETT, Rural Route 2, Box 580, advised that he is the subscriber to telephone number 938-5638. Mr. HAMMETT stated that he was unable to recall who placed the call to his home from Alpine, Texas, on December 16, 1967. Mr. HAMMETT stated, however, that his father was quite sick about that time and he was receiving telephone calls from his uncle, ED HUNSUCKER, from various parts of Texas. HAMMETT stated that ED HUNSUCKER is a truck driver for Hill and Hill, Houston, Texas, and as such travels quite extensively throughout the state of Texas. Mr. HAMMETT stated that it must have been Mr. HUNSUCKER making the call to inquire as to his father's health condition. HAMMETT viewed photographs of JAMES EARL RAY and stated this individual completely unknown to him.

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On 5/2/68 at Greenwood, Louisiana File # NO 157-10673
by SA PATRICK R. COONEY and
SA JAMES W. SMITH PRC-kat Date dictated 5/2/68

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On May 7, 1968, information was received from the Houston Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that EDWARD L. HUNSUCKER, 1901 Florida Street, Baytown, Texas, had advised on May 3, 1968, that he may have made a long distance telephone call from a telephone booth on Interstate Highway 10 in East Texas on December 16, 1967. HUNSUCKER further advised that during mid-December, 1967, his nephew, R. L. HAMMETT, of Greenwood, Louisiana, was seriously ill and, therefore, HUNSUCKER made several long distance calls to the HAMMETT residence.

HUNSUCKER advised he is a truck driver and travels throughout the country and often makes calls from roadside telephone booths. HUNSUCKER advised that JAMES EARL RAY is unknown to him by name, aliases and photograph.

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NO 157-10673 -epk

Re: WANDA's Seven Seas Restaurant
New Orleans, Louisiana

On April 30, 1968, information was received from the Jackson Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that a person closely resembling photographs of JAMES EARL RAY had been observed in Wanda's Seven Seas Restaurant, New Orleans, Louisiana, in December, 1967. On this particular occasion a minor brawl resulted and several arrests were made as a result of a dog being brought in by one of the customers. It was not recalled whether the individual resembling RAY was one of those arrested.

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KJH:med

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The following investigation was conducted at New Orleans, Louisiana, by SA KEVIN J. HARRIGAN on April 30, 1968, and May 1, 1968:

A review of New Orleans City and Suburban Directories and current New Orleans Telephone Book failed to contain a listing for a Wanda's Seven Seas Restaurant in New Orleans; however, listed was a Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, 608 Iberville.

WANDA LORMAND, owner, Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, 608 Iberville, advised that she recalls no disturbance at her place of business during December, 1967 involving an argument over a dog brought into her bar. She also advised she does not recall any arrests being made at her bar during the past six months. She viewed photographs of JAMES EARL RAY but with negative results.

ANN UHLICH, 1819 Cleveland, and who is employed as a night barmaid at Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, advised that she does not recall any disturbance at that bar in December, 1967 involving an argument over a dog brought into the bar. She advised that sometime during December, four or five persons were arrested outside the bar one night for fighting. However, she stated she could recall no specific details regarding this incident. She advised after viewing photographs of JAMES EARL RAY that he was unknown to her by either name or photograph.

BONNIE (LAST NAME UNKNOWN), who declined to furnish her last name or address and who is employed as a barmaid at Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, advised after viewing photographs of JAMES EARL RAY that she is certain this person has never been served at that bar. She also advised she does not recall any incident occurring during December, 1967 in which arrests were made following an argument involving a dog brought into the bar.

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KJH:med

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BILL KILEEN, Manager, Marian's Bar, 615 Iberville, was contacted and subject's photograph displayed. KILEEN advised photographs of RAY unknown to him, and he is certain this person had never been observed by him either at his own bar or at any of the other bars he frequents on Iberville Street.

DANA BARGER, who frequents on a regular basis Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, and who is currently employed at Handy-Dandy Labor Agency, and who has been known to SA HARRIGAN for two years, advised after viewing photographs of JAMES EARL RAY that he is certain he has never observed this person at Wanda's Seven Seas Bar.

CHARLES TAYLOR, also known as Cookie, who frequents Wanda's Seven Seas Bar on a daily basis and who resides at 803 St. Charles and who also has been known to SA HARRIGAN for over a year, advised after viewing photographs of JAMES EARL RAY that he is certain he had never observed RAY at either Wanda's Seven Seas Bar or at any of the other bars he frequents in the 600 block of Iberville Street.

Detective LARRY VIGUERIE, Robbery Detail, New Orleans Police Department, advised that he can recall no incident involving several arrests at Wanda's Seven Seas Bar in December, 1967. He advised he would discuss the matter with other detectives, and if any persons contacted could recall the incident he would immediately advise the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Detective VIGUERIE further advised that the New Orleans Police Department maintains on a daily basis a master list of all complaints received and arrests made in the New Orleans area. This list would contain the address at which an arrest was made or from which a complaint was received, the date this occurred, and the New Orleans police item regarding the incident. He advised that these usually number several hundred each day, and for the month of December, 1967 would total approximately five thousand. He advised he would have one of his detectives check this list for any arrests made during December, 1967 at Wanda's Seven Seas Bar.

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Detective GENE EISENMANN, Robbery Detail, New Orleans Police Department, advised that a check by him of the master list of all complaints and arrests made by the New Orleans Police Department during December, 1967 showed that on Sunday, December 17, 1967, at 9:53 PM, four persons had been arrested for fighting outside Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, 608 Iberville. This information was listed under Item #12 544-67. Detective EISENMANN further advised that the arrest involved three white males and one Negro male who were all released the same day on bond. None of the arrested persons were photographed or fingerprinted.

A check of records at the Record Room, New Orleans Police Department, under Item #L 12 554-67, showed that the following persons were arrested on December 17, 1963, at 9:53 PM outside of Wanda's Seven Seas Bar, 608 Iberville:

ROBERT TRILLET

White male

Born [redacted]

At Springvalley, Illinois

New Orleans Address--2511 Almonster Street

RONALD TAPLETTE

Negro male

Born [redacted]

At New Orleans, Louisiana

New Orleans Address--1930 Andry Street

THOMAS LEE LEWIS

White male

Born [redacted]

At New York City

New Orleans Address--2919 Elysian Fields

WILLART NETTERVILLE

White male

Born [redacted]

At Baton Rouge, Louisiana

New Orleans Address--1711 Jackson Avenue.

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It was also noted under this item number that the arresting officers were Patrolmen PAUL FLEMING and RONNIE CAMPBELL.

PAUL FLEMING, Patrolman, New Orleans Police Department, advised that he recalls making an arrest in mid December, 1967 outside Wanda's Seven Seas Bar. He advised that a fight occurred between a white and Negro male outside the bar and that two other white males attempted to interfere. All these persons were arrested and charged with fighting, and in addition one of the white men was charged with firing a pen gun and resisting arrest. FLEMING viewed photographs of JAMES EARL RAY but with negative results. However, he advised he is certain none of the persons arrested by him on that date was RAY or even resembled him.

RONNIE CAMPBELL, Tactical Unit, New Orleans Police Department, advised that he recalls making an arrest in December, 1967 involving three white males and one Negro male who were charged with fighting outside of Wanda's Seven Seas Bar. He advised that he could not specifically recall what these persons looked like and after viewing photographs of JAMES EARL RAY stated he is fairly certain none of the persons resembled RAY. He also advised that he regularly works in the area of town where Wanda's Seven Seas Bar is located and is certain he has never observed RAY in that part of town.

Detective JAMES MILLER and Detective EUGENE FIELDS, New Orleans Police Department, who work in the French Quarter area of New Orleans, and have several reliable sources in bars located in the 600 block of Iberville Street, were contacted and furnished their observations on available photographs of JAMES EARL RAY. Both these detectives advised subject's photographs were unknown to them and they stated they would make discreet inquiry regarding RAY among their sources on Iberville Street and that if any positive information developed indicating RAY at any time had been to any of these places they would immediately contact SA HARRIGAN.

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Re: Investigation Concerning
ROBERT HOOD STRADER, who Alleged
KING Assassination Plot in Baton
Rouge, Louisiana, area in
Summer of 1967

On May 6, 1968, information was received from the Springfield Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that ROBERT HOOD STRADER, of Lexington, Illinois, alleged that he had previously been informed during the Summer of 1967, by RAYMOND STARNES, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, that a group of ~~business~~ businessmen in the Baton Rouge, Louisiana, area had taken up a collection to obtain money to have KING assassinated.

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EJC:jah

The following investigation was conducted by
SA EDWARD J. CARNEY, JR.:

RAYMOND HENRY STARNES was interviewed at his residence, King David Apartments, Apartment F, 2816 David Drive, Metairie, Louisiana, on May 9, 1968. STARNES, who stated his business address is Suite 120, Courtland Plaza, 3900 Veterans Highway, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, advised as follows:

STARNES is a native of Denham Springs, Louisiana, and is currently associated in a business partnership with EARNEST C. DONNELL, Owner of the Earnest C. Donnell Construction Company, at Denham Springs, Louisiana. Denham Springs is located nine miles distant from Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

STARNES is well acquainted in Denham Springs and knows nearly all of the businessmen in that community, including those who are reportedly members of the Ku Klux Klan and who are considered to be strong segregationists.

STARNES was in Denham Springs in the Summer of 1967, at which time there was considerable racial strife taking place, including marches by Negro groups and opposition being presented to these marches by those individuals with strong segregation beliefs. STARNES stated that he himself is a liberal in his view towards Negroes and that he did not participate in any of the activities that took place in Denham Springs in the Summer of 1967. He stated, however, that he did frequently converse with individuals whom he considered to be members of the Ku Klux Klan, these persons having been individuals that he grew up with in Denham Springs.

STARNES stated that at no time during this period did any information come to his attention that there were businessmen in Denham Springs, Louisiana, or in Baton Rouge,

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Louisiana, who were taking up a collection to obtain money to have MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., assassinated. STARNs does not recall of having heard the name of KING even mentioned during the Summer of 1967, nor does he recall any information which would indicate there was a plot to kill any particular Negro or any individual of any race for that matter.

STARNs is against violence and if any information such as a plot to kill anyone had come to his attention, he would promptly notify an appropriate law enforcement agency.

During the Fall of 1967, STARNs recalls that an individual subsequently known to him as ROBERT STRADER appeared at the Earnest C. Donnell Construction Company in Denham Springs making claims to EARNEST DONNELL that he could obtain considerable financing from a SHAPIRO family in Miami, Florida. DONNELL became interested in STRADER's proposition and ordered STARNs to accompany STRADER to Miami, Florida, which he did and at which time he and STRADER met with a Mr. and Mrs. SHAPIRO. It developed, however, that STRADER did not previously know the SHAPIRO family and further that STRADER actually had no contacts or was not in a position to obtain financing for the Donnell Construction Company.

It was during the trip to Miami, Florida, that STARNs realized that STRADER had an apparent mental problem. STARNs recalled that while staying in motels in Florida, STRADER at times became most irrational and envisioned that he was being followed by Federal Agents.

After the Florida trip, STRADER continued to hang around the Donnell Company in Denham Springs, Louisiana, at which time STRADER's wife was also present. In STARNs' opinion, STRADER's wife is also an irrational person.

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On one occasion, STRADER, who was doing some work for the Donnell Company, took STARN'S personally owned vehicle with the permission of STARN'S on a business trip. STRADER's wife accompanied STRADER on this trip and they did not return as scheduled. The vehicle was subsequently located in Mississippi in an abandoned position. Also at this same time, STARN'S and EARNEST DONNELL discovered that STRADER had stolen some property from the company, such as a portable electric typewriter, a brief case full of valuable engineering fittings, a telephone credit card and other miscellaneous items. Also taken from the STARN'S vehicle was a .38 Police Special Revolver which was a sentimental keepsake which had been given to STARN'S by his father.

The theft of these items was reported to law enforcement agencies but DONNELL subsequently decided not to press charges. The revolver has never been recovered by STARN'S and he does not presently know its whereabouts.

STARN'S heard from some unrecalled source several months ago that STRADER either was or is presently confined to a mental institution. He has not seen STRADER since late Fall of 1967.

STRADER was a braggart by nature, frequently announced his animosity towards Negroes but was never known to STARN'S to have specifically mentioned MARTIN LUTHER KING or any other particular Negro. STRADER frequently bragged that he had contacts with the underworld but never specifically mentioned anyone by name.

STARN'S concluded that he is at a loss to explain why it is alleged that he possessed information concerning a plot to raise money to kill MARTIN KING. He stated that he wanted to cooperate fully with the FBI, which agency he admires considerably and that if any further recollection

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concerning the Summer of 1967 in Denham Springs came to him, he would promptly advise the New Orleans Office.

STARNS described STRADER as a white male, six feet two inches tall, 36 years of age and possessing blonde wavy hair. During the Summer of 1967, STARNS personally owned a 1967 Oldsmobile, white over black, bearing Texas license KLX or KIW 491.

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