

U. S. Department of Justice

(MATERIAL MUST NOT BE REMOVED FROM OR ADDED TO THIS FILE)

FEDERAL BUREAU

of
INVESTIGATION

ATLANTA

Bureau File Number

44-38861

ENTIRE FILE REVIEWED

CRITICAL
DECLASSIFICATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 6/30/03 BY SP1 CUL/HLS

See also Nos.

DO NOT DESTROY
PRESERVE FOR SELECT
COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

NO. 8

William 1-7-76

CLASSIFICATION NO.
44-2386

FOIPA REQUEST. DO NOT DESTROY PURSUANT
5 YEAR RULE. SERIAL SEE 190-40

Volume Number
Serials 2394-2412

2

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE ATLANTA	OFFICE OF ORIGIN MEMPHIS	DATE 2/3/76	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 1/4/76 - 1/29/76
TITLE OF CASE MURKIN		REPORT MADE BY SA THOMAS J. WILSON	TYPED BY :CW
		CHARACTER OF CASE CIVIL RIGHTS	

REFERENCES: Atlanta teletype to the Bureau, 1/5/76, and
Bureau teletype to Atlanta, 1/6/76.

- P -

EXPEDITEADMINISTRATIVE:

ARNOLD RAY GODFREY, 1105 Lakeshore Drive, Jonesboro, Georgia, telephone 477-5036, was telephonically contacted on 1/16/76, and requested to submit to a polygraph examination at which time he stated "I'm innocent, I don't want to talk to the FBI any further".

GODFREY stated if the FBI is interested in pursuing this matter any further, he will not talk unless the FBI contacts his attorney JACK V. DORSEY, 934-8921, or 633-9607.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS CLAIMED					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE	ACQUIT- TALS	CASE HAS BEEN: PENDING OVER ONE YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO PENDING PROSECUTION OVER SIX MONTHS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
CONVIC.	PRETRIAL DIVERSION	FUG.	FINES	SAVINGS	RECOVERIES		
APPROVED						SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	
COPIES MADE:						DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW	
2 - Bureau (44-38861)						<div style="font-size: 2em; text-align: center;">Rif</div>	
2 - El Paso (44-920)							
2 - Memphis (44-1987)							
2 - Atlanta (44-2386)							
<div style="text-align: center;">OUT-GOING</div> Dissemination Record of Attached Report						Notations	
Agency			SEARCHED			<div style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">44-2386-2394</div>	
Request Recd.			SERIALIZED				
Date Fwd.			INDEXED				
How Fwd.			FILED				
By							

COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

On 1/19/76, LEON OWEN POWELL, 2786 Alston Drive, Apartment 9, Decatur, Georgia, telephonically contacted the Atlanta Office of the FBI, advising he was sick and desired to postpone his polygraph examination until the week of 1/26 - 30/76.

On 1/29/76, LEON OWEN POWELL voluntarily appeared at the Atlanta Office of the FBI to submit to a polygraph examination. POWELL was advised of his rights by SA JOHN B. REYNOLDS as shown on a warning and waiver of rights form, which he signed after reading. POWELL also executed a consent or waiver to take a polygraph examination form.

On 1/29/76, at 7:45 PM, LEON OWEN POWELL, after executing FD-328 (Polygraph Consent Form), was afforded a polygraph examination in the Atlanta Office of the FBI. Assisting in the collateral interview was SA AUGUST W. BULFER. POWELL, during pre-polygraph interview, substantially furnished the same information as in previous interviews with the 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, JR. POWELL previously stated GODFREY made the statement \$50,000 was to be paid. However, when going over the polygraph questions to be asked him, he requested that the amount be deleted from the question and the words "big money" be substituted for \$50,000. According to POWELL, the conversation with GODFREY came about while they were sitting in Pete's Bar during the fall of 1967, and the conversation was concerning MARTIN LUTHER KING's activities at which time someone stated KING should be killed and POWELL's brother, CLAUDE POWELL, made a statement to the effect that 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 acknowledged 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.

- 8 -
COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

POWELL stated this white male never 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 of 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 \$2,500 or \$25,000, stated RALPH never did state the amount but he realized that that much money in that size briefcase would have to be at least \$25,000. RALPH also made the statement that there would be "fifty more" when MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., 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 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 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, JR.?". 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".

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

- C -
COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

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 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 these charts reflects that POWELL responded generally in the same manner to all questions asked with no significant response to any individual question whereby a conclusion could be drawn as to his being truthful or untruthful. Therefore, these polygraph examinations were determined to be inconclusive.

On 1/19/76, at 8:15 PM, CLAUDE POWELL, JR., was afforded a polygraph examination by SA LOREN K. LEE, of the San Antonio Division of the FBI, who was unassisted in the 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 a possible knowledge regarding the unidentified person mentioned in the above questions.

POWELL was left with the impression that results of the polygraph examination were unclear and that the strong possibility existed wherein the FBI would request an additional test in the immediate future. Results of the test were not discussed in any way with POWELL nor was interrogation effected.

LEADS:

ATLANTA DIVISION

- D -
COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

AT ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

Will recontact LEON OWEN POWELL and display to him revised artist's conception and ascertain if identical with RALPH (Last Name Unknown).

- E* -
COVER PAGE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of: SA THOMAS J. WILSON Office: ATLANTA
Date: FEBRUARY 3, 1976
Field Office File #: 44-2386 Bureau File #: 44-38861
Title: MURKIN

Character: CIVIL RIGHTS

Synopsis:

On 1/4/76, LEON OWEN POWELL interviewed and advised in late October or early November, 1967, he and his brother, CLAUDE POWELL, JR., were approached by a mutual friend, RAY GODFREY, regarding the assassination of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. A week after this initial meeting, an individual named RALPH (LNU), contacted he and his brother and advised them he would pay \$75,000 to assassinate MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. The POWELLS turned the offer down and have not seen RALPH (LNU) since then. CLAUDE POWELL, JR., interviewed at Midland, Texas, and furnished same information. RAY GODFREY located and interviewed and stated he never talked to POWELL brothers about murdering MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., and furthermore, has no knowledge of any individual named RALPH. Other relatives of POWELLS contacted and advised both LEON and CLAUDE POWELL are hard drinkers and question veracity of statements.

- P -

DETAILS:

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.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1970 O - 406-840

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 1/7/76

LEON OWEN POWELL, a white male, 3841 Austin Drive, Decatur, Georgia, telephone 289-1545 was advised of the identities of the interviewing agents and requested to furnish information that he possessed concerning the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

POWELL was advised of his rights by SA AUGUST W. BULFER as shown on a handwritten warning and waiver of rights form which POWELL executed after reading. POWELL declined to furnish a signed statement, however voluntarily furnished the following information.

During late October or early November, 1967, exact date unknown, during the late afternoon hours he and his brother CLAUDE POWELL, MJR., who uses the alias SHOTGUN POWELL, a white male who is currently located at the Scottish Inn, room number unknown, at Midland, Texas, employment unknown, were having a drink in Pete's Bar at Moreland and Confederate Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia.

He and his brother were approached by a mutual friend, RAY GODFREY a white male, approximately 40 years old, 6'1" tall, 220 pounds, auburn hair, country and western singer, employed with the Atlanta Sanitation Department, who asked if he and his brother would be interested in making \$50,000.

During the conversation with GODFREY it was determined that GODFREY could and would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. He and his brother expressed interest in the contract to murder KING at which time the conversation with GODFREY was terminated and GODFREY told them that they would be contacted concerning the murder contract of KING in the near future.

Interviewed on 1/4/76 at Decatur, Georgia File # Atlanta 44-2386

by SAs THOMAS J. WILSON and
AUGUST W. BULFER /bw Date dictated 1/7/76

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.

AT 44-2386

2

Approximately one week after the meeting with GODFREY the POWELL brothers were again drinking in Pete's Bar, exact date unknown, at approximately 4 or 5 PM when they were approached by an individual named RALPH (Last Name Unknown), a white male, heavy set, 6'1" to 6'2", no accent, well groomed, late 40's, well spoken, who he described as a "Lawyer type". RALPH (LNU) who was in possession of a briefcase approached him and his brother, put his briefcase on the table, and said, "I guess you know why I'm here". He and his brother nodded their heads in assent at which time RALPH opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000 and he then said, "If you decide to take the job there's \$50,000 more when it's completed". SHOTGUN POWELL replied to RALPH that he and his brother needed time to think it over, at which time RALPH (LNU) stated, "If your mind is not made up now I can't do business with you". RALPH (LNU) then stood up and nothing else was said. RALPH (LNU) closed his briefcase and left.

POWELL stated that neither he nor his brother observed how RALPH (LNU) came or left the bar and they have not seen RALPH (LNU) since that date.

During the short conversation with RALPH he never actually said that the money being offered to them was to kill MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

He has not had any type of contact with RAY GODFREY in approximately seven years and does not know GODFREY's current location.

The only other individuals aware of he and his brother's meeting with RALPH (LNU) are his former wife, ANNIE LOIS COMPOS, a white female, 4120 Glenwood Road, Apartment A, Atlanta, and PETE DAVIS, a white male, owner of the bar where he and his brother talked with RALPH (LNU).

AT 44-2386

3

The bar where he and his brother met RALPH (LNU) burned down several years ago and he believes that PETE DAVIS is currently manager for Shrimp Boats restaurants with headquarters in Macon, Georgia. DAVIS also could possibly be contacted through HERBERT DAVIS who lives on Flat Shoals Road in Atlanta, Georgia and used to own the Atlanta Technical School.

His former wife has no first hand knowledge of the matter. She is aware of the facts as he described them to her.

PETE DAVIS actually observed RALPH (LNU) enter and exit his bar but DAVIS never entered the conversation between RALPH (LNU) and themselves.

Neither he nor his brother were involved in the killing of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., because the whole situation as he described above "scared us".
th

He is willing to take a polygraph in this matter.

He has waited nine years to contact the FBI regarding this matter because he recently observed a documentary on television which disturbed his conscience and he felt he had to furnish this information to the FBI.

POWELL stated the reason he believes he and his brother were contacted by GODFREY is because his brother, SHOTGUN POWELL served five years for armed robbery and during the period of time around 1967 his brother had a reputation for being an expert with a shotgun. POWELL stated his brother constantly carried a shotgun because "He has an inferior complex".

AT 44-2386

4

POWELL advised he does not know JAMES EARL RAY and has no other information concerning the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

He believes that his brother will cooperate in discussing this matter with the FBI and he does not know if GODFREY would be willing to discuss his knowledge of what transacted between them in 1967.

The following description of LEON OWEN POWELL was obtained through observation and interview:

Race	White
Sex	Male
Date of Birth	
Place of Birth	Stephens County, Georgia
Height	6'
Weight	142
Hair	Blond
Eyes	Brown
Build	Medium
Complexion	Light
Tattoos, marks and scars	Tattoo on right arm near shoulder of a lady in a champagne cglass. The words Betty and True Love tattooed on left forearm. On left arm bbicep is tattoo of a cherry with words 'here's mine where's yours'
Education	High School, Toccoa, Georgia
Employment	Self-employed as drywall installer, currently unemployed
Residence	Living with son DAVID POWELL age 18 and wife BRENDA at 3841 Austin Drive, Decatur, Georgia. His son DAVID will always know his whereabouts.

AT 44-2386

5

Military Service

U. S. Army, 1952-1955,
service number RA14478523,
Ranger Instructor, discharged
as Private for going Absent
Without Official Leave (AWOL)

Marital Status

Divorced

Other Home Address

Route 2, Toccoa, Georgia
telephone 886-3254

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 1/15/76

1

CLAUDE POWELL, JR., was located at the Scottish Inn Motel, Interstate Highway 20 at Holiday Hill Road, Room 211. POWELL was advised of the identities of the interviewing Agents and at the outset of the interview, was asked if he had been in contact with any member of his family or in particular, his brother, LEON POWELL. POWELL denied being in contact with any member of his family, including LEON POWELL, since his departure from Atlanta, Georgia, on December 31, 1975. He was then interviewed as follows:

POWELL was asked if he had ever been offered a large sum of money to commit a murder, and he immediately volunteered that he had been offered \$25,000 shortly before the actual assassination of MARTIN LUTHER KING to murder MARTIN LUTHER KING. He recalled the circumstances of that offer as follows:

Approximately three to four weeks prior to the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING, he and his brother, LEON POWELL, were seated in a booth in Pete's Bar on Moreland Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia. A friend of his brother, RAY GODFREY, a musician and Atlanta City employee, joined them at their booth and engaged in conversation with LEON. He paid no particular attention to what LEON and RAY were talking about. GODFREY left the booth, and, in approximately 10 to 15 minutes, an individual previously unknown to him, came to their booth and seated himself opposite from LEON and him.

As this unknown person sat down, he placed an expensive-looking black brief case on the table. He described the unknown person as being a white male, approximately 5'8" in height, medium build, approximately 150 pounds, approximately 30 years of age. POWELL explained that the unknown person appeared to him to be out of place in such an establishment as Pete's Bar, in view of his dress, which did not fit into the crowd that frequented Pete's Bar.

On 1/8/76 at Midland, Texas File # EP 44-920
by SA GERALD D. GALBREATH
SA FRANZ W. NENZEL FWN:pm Date dictated 1/14/76

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.

The unknown person impressed him as being a well educated person, who appeared to be a professional type such as a lawyer. He said the unknown person was clean cut, and very calm and cool in his manner. He stated the unknown person may have introduced himself, but he does not recall any names. The unknown person asked LEON and him if they wanted to pull a job. He does not know the exact wording, but he questioned the unknown person concerning the nature of the job, and how much money it paid. The unknown person told him and LEON that he wanted them to do away with someone and when POWELL questioned the unknown person further, he was told that it was someone important. The unknown person then told him and LEON that he wanted them to kill MARTIN LUTHER KING, and would pay them \$25,000 now and \$25,000 when the job was done. The unknown person then opened his brief case which was full of wrapped currency; some of the bills he noticed were in \$100 denominations. He stated that he was shocked by the statements of the unknown person, and initially assumed that it was some sort of prank or possibly a law enforcement officer trying to trick him. After the unknown person made the offer, he ignored any further conversation, whereupon the unknown person closed his brief case and departed.

He has never had any further contact, nor did he ever ascertain the identity of the unknown person, or means or reason for the offered payment to kill MARTIN LUTHER KING. He related that he had gained the bad reputation of being a hoodlum because of his past prison record, participation in several fights, and habit of carrying a shotgun in his vehicle, which he frequently loaned to the bartender at Pete's Bar whenever trouble occurred. He denied ever receiving such an offer prior to this incident, and further denied affiliation with any group which advocated racial hatred. He admitted that he had made statements while drunk to the effect that he had no aversion to killing blacks, although he had never seriously considered doing so.

POWELL stated he was shocked and dismayed to learn, approximately three to four weeks later, that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been murdered. He advised that he did not

EP 44-920

3

go to any law enforcement officers, and tell them of the above contact with the unknown person, because he felt he might become a suspect in the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING.

POWELL was then requested to assist the FBI by providing an artist conception of the unknown person who contacted him at Pete's Bar by the use of a facial identification catalogue. It was explained to POWELL that a sketch would be made from a combination of features that he selected from photographs displayed in the catalogue. Each category in the catalogue was thoroughly explained and photographs in these categories were shown to POWELL. POWELL then stated that he would be unable to assist in this regard because he had only talked with the unknown person for approximately five minutes, and that he would not recognize him even if he was brought into his motel room at that moment.

The following descriptive data was obtained through interview and observation:

Name	CLAUDE POWELL, JR.
Alias	Junior Powell Shotgun Powell
Sex	Male
Race	White
Date of Birth	
Place of Birth	Stephens County, Georgia
Height	6'2
Weight	170
Hair	Gray-Black
Eyes	Blue
Education	Finished 4th grade
Employment	Self employed
Occupation	Carpenter and dry wall finisher
Parent	HEPSIE POWELL, Route 3, Toccoa, Georgia
Brothers	LEON POWELL, Atlanta, Georgia HUBERT POWELL Route 3, Toccoa, Georgia WENDELL POWELL, Belmont, North Carolina (address unknown) EDWARD POWELL, Shamdon, Georgia

EP 44-920

4

Sister

FLORIS BRYSON
Franklin, North Carolina
(address unknown)

Wife

JACKIE POWELL,
unemployed, 4163 Camby Lane,
no telephone, Decatur, Georgia
Same as wife

Permanent address

Tattoos

Dragon, left bicep; "LUCY,
my wife is so dear to me",
left forearm; "LOIS" inside
right forearm; "Too sweet
to live, to mean to die",
across chest; "BONNIE" upper
right shoulder; "BETTY", upper
left shoulder

AT 44-2386

TJW:wy

1

The following investigation was conducted by
Special Agent THOMAS J. WILSON at Atlanta, Georgia:

On January 7, 1976, the Atlanta City Directory
Haines City Directory, and Greater Atlanta Southern Bell
Telephone Directory for the years 1967 and 1968 were
reviewed with negative results regarding and establish-
ment on Moreland Avenue named Pete's Place or any similar
name.

SHIRLEY LANE, bartender, Driftwood Lounge,
1575 Moreland Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, advised that
approximately seven or eight years ago an individual
named PETE DAVIS did in fact own and operate a bar in the
last block of Moreland Avenue. She has heard that PETE
DAVIS has since passed away. Ms. LANE advised PETE's wife,
DOROTHY DAVIS, could possibly be located at telephone
number 957-2626. She stated she has been a frequent
visitor to the lounge known as Pete's Place and that is
the reason why she is so familiar with PETE and DOROTHY
DAVIS.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date of transcription 1/15/76

DOROTHY DAVIS, telephone number 957-2626, was contacted and advised that her husband, PETE DAVIS, did own and operate a bar on Moreland Avenue. This bar was at one time known as Pete's Place.

Her husband died from cancer in May, 1975.

She is not familiar with the name RALPH (last name unknown), LEON or CLAUDE POWELL. She remembers her husband talked about RAY GODFREY, however, she has no idea how he could be located.

She has no idea what became of the records concerning the operation of Pete's Place.

At the outset, Mrs. DAVIS was advised of the identity of the interviewing agent, the nature of the inquiry, and that any information she furnished could be used in a court of law. She voluntarily furnished the above information:

Interviewed 1/7/76 at Atlanta, Georgia File # AT 44-2386
by SA THOMAS J. WILSON :wy Date dictated 1/13/76

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.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 1/14/76

ANNIE LOIS CAMPOS was contacted at her residence and furnished the following information:

She was unable to remember any incident where her husband told her he and his brother had been hired to assassinate any individual. Upon the suggestion of the interviewing Agents by naming MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., as the victim, Mrs. CAMPOS immediately responded that sometime after MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., was assassinated, her husband told her that an individual had approached him in a bar, had shown him a suitcase full of money and suggested that he and his brother assassinate MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. When he told her about this incident, he was under the influence of alcoholic beverages; in fact, she stated her husband was an alcoholic. Many times she had to go to the bar on a Friday night and physically remove her husband in order that he would spend all of his paycheck so the children would have some food. A lot of times when her husband was drunk he talked about killing different individuals. She assumed this had a lot to do with when he was in the Army.

Mrs. CAMPOS stated, however, that if her husband told her the same story while he was sober, she would tend to put some truth in the incident.

The following description of ANNIE LOIS CAMPOS was obtained through observation and interview:

Race	White
Sex	Female
Date of birth	
Place of birth	Homer, Georgia
Husband's name	OLE CAMPOS

She had previously been married to LEON OWEN POWELL from July, 1955, until 1975.

Interviewed on 1/7/76 at Atlanta, Georgia File # Atlanta 44-2386
by SA CHARLES T. CARROLL, JR., and
SA THOMAS J. WILSON TJW:wy/cw Date dictated 1/13/76

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. - 13 -

AT 44-2386

TJW:wy

1

The following investigation was conducted by
Special Agent THOMAS J. WILSON in Atlanta, Georgia.

On January 7, 1976, Mrs. L. S. PENNINGTON, Director of Personnel, City of Atlanta, was contacted and advised she had caused the city personnel records to be reviewed and could find no record of RAY GODFREY or RAYMOND GODFREY being employed or having ever been employed by the City of Atlanta.

C. L. SNEED, Secretary, Musicians Union Number 148, Atlanta, Georgia, advised he reviewed the union's records and could find no reference to a RAY or RAYMOND GODFREY. SNEED suggested that BOBBY JOHNSON, radio station WPLO be contacted regarding the names of any old time country and western singers.

AT 44-2386

TJW:wy

1

The following investigation was conducted by
Special Agent THOMAS J. WILSON at Atlanta, Georgia:

On January 8, 1976, BOBBY JOHNSON, Country Music Section, radio station WPLO, Atlanta, Georgia, advised there had been a country and western singer by the name of RAY GODFREY in 1967 or 1968. This singer was handled locally by Lowery Music Company, Atlanta, Georgia. BILL LOWERY at Lowery Music would probably have more information about the whereabouts of RAY GODFREY.

On January 8, 1975, MARY TALLENT, secretary to the president, Lowery Music Company, advised that back in 1967, Lowery Music had handled a country and western singer by the name of RAY GODFREY. GODFREY would at this time be a white male approximately 45 to 50 years of age. In 1967 GODFREY worked for the Atlanta Water Company, telephone 422-1481.

She had numerous dealings with RAY GODFREY and described him as a "very country fellow" and refused to believe that he could be in any sort of trouble.

COTTON CARRIER, song writer, Lowery Music Company, Atlanta, Georgia, was also contacted and advised that the last time he had talked to RAY GODFREY that RAY GODFREY was employed with the Atlanta Water or either the Atlanta Sewer Department at telephone number 622-1481. He stated that GODFREY was a very likeable fellow and could not possibly be in any trouble.

The Haines City Directory revealed that telephone number 622-1481 is listed to the City of Atlanta Sewer Department.

AT 44-2386

2

Mrs. L. S. PENNINGTON, Director of Personnel, City of Atlanta, was recontacted and advised that PAT SOJKA, supervisor, administrative services, would be the person to contact regarding anyone employed at telephone number 622-1481.

PAT SOJKA was contacted and advised that he is familiar with the City of Atlanta employee named RAY GODFREY. Current records of the Sewer Department reflect a true name of A. R. GODFREY living at 1105 Lakeshore Drive, Jonesboro, Georgia, telephone 477-5036.

On January 12, 1976, GROVE DAY, supervisor, City of Atlanta Sewer Division, was contacted and advised that RAY GODFREY was employed in his department and could be interviewed any morning before 8:30 A.M.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 1/14/76

ARNOLD RAY GODFREY, 1105 Lakeshore Drive, Jonesboro, Georgia, was contacted at his place of employment, City of Atlanta Sewer Department, 360 Englewood Road, SE, and advised that an interview was desired with him concerning an allegation regarding his participation in a plot to assassinate MARTIN LUTHER KING. He was promptly advised of his rights by Special Agent THOMAS J. WILSON and stated he understood his rights, but did not wish to sign anything, however, would consent to be interviewed. Thereafter, and promptly following this, he was interviewed and furnished the following information:

He has been employed by the City of Atlanta in the Sewer Department since 1949. He worked for approximately eight years as a laborer, the last five years as a foreman and all the time in between as a truck driver. He was also a country and western singer for some time. Most of his records were produced in 1967 or 1968. One of the records under the Saber label was on one side "Count me out" and on the other side "Try one on for size". Another record under the Columbia label was called "Always room for one more Fool like Me".

When he was actually engaged as a country and western singer he was tending bar part-time at a bar known as Pete's Bar on Moreland Avenue. He also had a band and sang with them at the same time.

He did not know anything about any assassination plot of any kind. He never talked with anyone regarding the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING before KING had been assassinated. He did not make any arrangements with anyone to have KING assassinated by CLAUDE and LEON POWELL. When questioned about any well-dressed individuals frequenting Pete's Place GODFREY remembered a white male approximately 45 years of age with wavy hair, very clean-cut and very well spoken being in Pete's Place numerous times. This individual carried a walking stick in his right hand and to the best of GODFREY's memory, this individual had something wrong with his right leg.

1/13/76	Atlanta, Georgia	AT 44-2386
Interviewed on _____ at _____	File # _____	
SA BERNARD R. BERRY		
SA THOMAS J. WILSON :wy		1/13/76
by _____	Date dictated _____	

- 17 -

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.

AT 44-2386

GODFREY could not remember the individual's name but described him as approximately 5'11", 170-180 pounds, of Latin descent. GODFREY further stated that this individual could talk in two different languages, one of which he thought was "Mexican". He stated that this individual had lots of money and was thought to be owner of a number of bars in honky tonk places around Atlanta. He thought that one of the bars that this individual owned in 1967 was located at the corner of Hunter and Bell Street in Atlanta. This individual was driving a big black automobile, probably a Lincoln. He was reportedly associated with the Venable Music Company in some manner. GODFREY thought that it was possible that some individual connected with Venable Music Company and this individual were connected in numerous enterprises throughout the city. GODFREY stated that PETE DAVIS would be able to identify this individual. GODFREY further stated that possibly DIANE (last name unknown) a former bartender at Pete's Place may also be able to identify this individual. DIANE also owns a bar known as "The Office" located on Flat Shoals in Atlanta

GODFREY again denied having any conversation with the POWELLS' or anyone else regarding the assassination of MARTIN LUTHER KING prior to his actual assassination. GODFREY advised he would be more than willing to take a polygraph examination to clear the air.

The following description was obtained through observation and interview:

Race	White
Sex	Male
Date of birth	
Place of birth	Copperhill, Tennessee
Height	6'3"
Weight	210

AT 44-2386

Hair	Greying
Residence	1105 Lakeshore Drive Jonesboro, Georgia
Telephone	477-5036
Military service	Served with the National Guard, State of Georgia Number 24-77-30-31, honorable discharge
Arrest record	None admitted other than drunk driving

GODFREY stated he had never been a member of the
Ku Klux Klan or any other radical organization.

AT 44-2386

On January 15, 1976, DIANE BRADY, white female, date of birth [redacted] place of birth Atlanta, Georgia, current owner of The Office Lounge, was interviewed and she advised she is quite certain that in 1967, she was employed as a carhop and bartender at Pete's Place on Moreland Avenue. She advised she is familiar with RAY GODFREY and after viewing a photograph of CLAUDE POWELL, JR., and LEON OWEN POWELL, she stated she was familiar with both of them. She stated she has never heard anyone talking about any murder of any type at Pete's Place. She was unable to identify anyone resembling an artist's conception of RALPH (Last Name Unknown). She advised she can only describe one individual who came into Pete's Place who was well-dressed and walked with a limp. She advised she knew the individual as "DUKE". "DUKE" was a white male, approximately 6'0", 180 pounds, dark hair, walked with a limp, and drove a large dark car with a Gwinnett County tag. She advised "DUKE" always seemed to have money, in fact, he gave her a \$50 tip. She can not locate "DUKE" at this time, and in fact, she has been trying to find him on her own. "DUKE" very rarely went into the bar, and always got his beverages through the carhops. DIANE advised another carhop named DOTTIE (Last Name Unknown), who she thinks is currently working for Barbara's Lounge on Moreland Avenue, might be able to assist in the identification of the individual in the artist's conception in view of the fact that she was a long-time employee of Pete's Place.

On January 15, 1976, EDNA McKINNON, owner of McKinnon's Restaurant, Moreland Avenue, advised she does have an employee named "DOTTIE". "DOTTIE" did work for her when she owned The Piglet Restaurant, located at Hill Street and Moreland Avenue in Atlanta. "DOTTIE" had the day off and McKINNON advised she was out of town. She stated DOTTIE would be back for work at 2:00 PM, Friday, January 16, 1976.

DIANE BRADY was recontacted and she advised all other employees of Pete's Place have died since Pete's Place was closed. She advised that as far as she can remember, the only individuals still living who 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".

AT 44-2386

On January 16, 1976, DOTTIE UNDERHILL, waitress at McKinnon's Restaurant, Moreland Avenue, advised she has never worked at any other establishment on Moreland Avenue. She stated she has never been employed at any lounge called "Pete's Place", nor is she familiar with the name PETE DAVIS.

DAVID McKINNON, son of the owner of McKinnon's Restaurant, 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 advised he can not recall any other waitress named "DOTTIE" other than the one who is employed now.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date of transcription 1/14/76

JO PRESSLEY, Identification Division, Atlanta Police Department, advised her department had the following records on a LEON OWEN POWELL, date of birth [redacted] and a CLAUDE POWELL, JR. Ms. PRESSLEY provided photostatic copies of the identification record for both individuals which are attached hereto.

Interviewed on 1/7/76 at Atlanta, Georgia File # AT 44-2386

by SA THOMAS J. WILSON :wy Date dictated 1/13/76

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.

BUREAU NO.

211422

NAME POWELL, LEON OWEN RACE WHITE SEX MALE
ALIASES _____ NATIONALITY U.S.A.
ADDRESS 371 TERRY STREET S.E. CITY ATLANTA STATE GEORGIA
OCCUPATION SERVICE STATION ATTENDANT EMPLOYER GRESHAM PARK PHILLIPS 66: ?? GRESHAM P.
DEKALB CO., GA.
BIRTHPLACE STEPHENS CO., GA. DATE OF BIRTH [REDACTED] AGE 27
EDUCATION 11 BUILD MEDIUM HEIGHT 6-0 WEIGHT 150
COMPLEXION RUDDY +BLOND HAIR BLOND EYES GREY
SCARS & MARKS TT OF WOMAN IN GLASS RT. UPPER OUTER ARM
TT "HERES MINE - WHERE'S YOURS" & CHERRY LT. OUTER UPPER ARM
SPOUSE LOIS POWELL ADDRESS SAME AS PRISONER
PARENT MO: HEPSIE POWELL ADDRESS 509 SPRING ST., TOCCOA, GEORGIA
RELATIVE BRO: EDWARD POWELL ADDRESS 963 WEST MORELAND AVE., NE., ATLANTA,
CRIME A.M.C. DOCKET _____
ARRESTED JUN 29 1962 OFFICERS MOSS FROM COURT HOUSE WARR. ISSUED 6-29-62
JAIL ENTRY 662W-27-M-Harr-AMC-300-Civil-6-29-62
RELEASED FROM JAIL 297 Bond - Fulton - JUN 29 1962 B.F. _____
DISPOSITION 58096 Aband. W/C withdrawn 7-6-62

FURNISHED TO Wilson BY [Signature]DATE 1-7-76 BY [Signature]

211422

RECEIVED AT BELLWOOD _____

RELEASED FROM BELLWOOD _____

12 M 29 W 100 15
I 19 W 100 18

FPC _____

SIGNATURE Leon O. PowellINFORMATION BY W.F. SHATTLESFINGERPRINTED BY [Signature]

(Right Index)

DATE JUN 29 1962

- 23 -

BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION, ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT, ATLANTA, GA.

PHOTO BY OK

ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

CONSOLIDATED

Herbert T. Jenkins,
Chief of Police

By

Captain in Charge

211422

The following is the record of APD No. _____ and FBI No. 220 012 E

CONTRIBUTOR OF FINGERPRINTS	NAME AND NUMBER	ARRESTED OR RECEIVED	CHARGE	DISPOSITION
Provost Marshal Penning, Ga.	Leon Powell #80475	8-26-55	Art. 86	No Disposition Available 7-9-62
, Atlanta, Ga.	Leon O. Powell #211422	6-28-62	Wife Beating	Withdrawn 7-6-62
, Atlanta, Ga.	Leon Owen Powell #211422	6-29-62	Abandonment	Withdrawn 7-6-62
<p>FURNISHED TO: <i>Wilcox</i> <i>7B2</i></p> <p>DATE: <i>1-7-70</i> BY: <i>[Signature]</i></p>				

* Represents notations unsupported by fingerprints

NOTICE: This record is furnished for official use only

FORM 32-1-27

SS// UNKNOWN

BUREAU NO.

231799

NAME POWELL, CLAUDE JR. RACE W SEX M
 ALIASES POWELL, J.R. NATIONALITY _____
 ADDRESS 4163 CANBY LANE S.W. CITY DECATUR, STATE GA.
 OCCUPATION DRY WALL FINISHER EMPLOYER SELF EMPLOYED
 BIRTHPLACE STEVENS CO. GA. DATE OF BIRTH AGE 48
 EDUCATION 5 BUILD MED. HEIGHT 602 WEIGHT 171
(SLENDER-MEDIUM-STOUT)
 COMPLEXION RUD HAIR BRO HAIR TYPE STRAIGHT
(FAIR-DARK-RUDDY-FRECKLED-ETC.) (RECEDING-BALD-CURLY-KINKY-PROCESSED-ETC.)
 EYES BZO EYE DEFECT - (DESCRIBE) NONE MUSTACH-BEARD-GOATEE NONE
 TEETH NORMAL NOSE NORMAL
(FALSE-PROTRUDING-BROKEN-MISSING-DECAYED-GOLDCAP) (HOOKED-PUG-CROOKED-LONG-BROAD-ETC.)
 MARKS TT: DRAGON-LUCY-MY WIFE IS SO DEAR TO ME. LEFT ARM
(TATTOOS-MOLES-WARTS-DIMPLES-BIRTHMARKS-ETC.-DESCRIBE LOCATION)
 VISIBLE SCARS-(DESCRIBE) NONE VISIBLE
(CUT-BURN-ETC.-DESCRIBE & LOCATION ON BODY)
 AMPUTATIONS & DEFORMITIES NONE
 MISC. CHARACTERISTICS RIGHT HANDED
(LEFTHANDED-HARE LIP-PIERCED EARLOBES-ETC.)
 SPEECH NORMAL GAIT NORMAL
(SOFT-LOUD-RAPID-FOREIGN-VULGAR-LISPS-STUTTERS-MUMBLES-ETC.) (FAST-SLOW-SHUFFLES-LIMPS)
 CLOTHING TYPE - (SPORT-BUSINESS-WORK-ETC.) SPORT
 SPOUSE JACKIE POWELL ADDRESS SAME AS P
 PARENTS MO: HEPSIE POWELL ADDRESS TOCCOA, GA.
 RELATIVES BO: LEON POWELL ADDRESS ?? MEADOW LANE, DECATUR, GA.
 CRIME INDECENT EXPOSURE 2. DRUNK DOCKET 44564-20
 ARRESTED 082573 OFFICERS ML CROWDER WARR. ISS. _____
 JAIL ENTRY _____
 RELEASE FROM JAIL _____

DISPOSITION

Indecent Exposure \$25 or 13 mos 8/27/73
Drunk \$25 or 13 mos 8/27/73

FURNISHED TO:

DATE

Wilson
7/2/73

REC'D AT BELLWOOD

RELEASED FROM BELLWOOD

SIGNATURE

INFORMATION BY

RILEY SWANSON

PRINTED BY

*PHOTOGRAPHED BY

RILEY SWANSON

DATE

082573

* FLC

PREV. ARRI ROBB

11 0 5 T 00 16

* Indecent Exposure

I 18 T 01 15

IDENTIFICATION SECTION - ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

FORM 32-1.35 REVISED

- 25 -

**ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION
ATLANTA, GEORGIA**

*Herbert T. Jenkins,
Chief of Police*

231799

By _____
Captain in Charge

The following is the record of APD No. _____ and FBI No. 212 946 A

CONTRIBUTOR OF FINGERPRINTS	NAME AND NUMBER	ARRESTED OR RECEIVED	CHARGE	DISPOSITION
Mecklenburg Co. Pol. Charlotte, N. C.	Claude Powell, Jr. #4822	5-10-49	Armed Robb.	5-10 Yrs. S. Pen
3. of I. Pr. Div. Raleigh, N. C.	Claude Powell, Jr. #49663	5-24-49	Robb.	5-10 Yrs. 4-23-52 Paroled 3-28-54 Disch. Per Exp.
PD Atlanta, Ga	Claude Powell Jr #231799	6-28-65	Allowing Intox. Person to Drive (2)	56127- Ct 1- \$100 and 8 mos; 56128 Ct 2 \$25 and 4 mos conc w/ 56127 6-28-65
PD, Atlanta, Ga.	Claude Powell #231799	8-25-73	Indecent Exposure	\$25 or 13 das 8-27-73
			Drunk	\$25 or 13 das. 8-27-73
<p>FURNISHED TO: <i>Wilson</i> <i>7B2</i></p> <p>DATE: <i>1-7-74</i></p>				

* Represents notations unsupported by fingerprints

NOTICE: This record is furnished for official use only

AT 44-2386

On January 14, 1976, the FBI Identification Division, Washington, D.C., provided the attached identification record for ARNOLD RAY GODFREY, date of birth [redacted] place of birth Cooperhill, Tennessee:

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

1-14-76 807 MLH

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	
<p>Since neither fingerprints nor an identifying number which is indexed in our files accompanied this request, FBI cannot guarantee that this material concerns the individual in whom you are interested.</p>				

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: Cooperhill TN

Scars and Marks: Scar R/F arm 2"

Address: In 1964 569 Greham Ave Atlanta GA

Occupation: Construction

Since neither fingerprints nor an
identifying number which is indexed
in our files accompanied your request
FBI cannot positively identify or confirm
that this material concerns the
individual in whom you are interested.

Social Security Number: Unknown

AT 44-2386

The following investigation was conducted by the Charlotte Division of the FBI, on January 9, 1976:

WENDELL SUTTON POWELL, Foreman, Pharr Yarns, was interviewed at his home, 218 Ewing Drive, Belmont, North Carolina, and advised his correspondence with his brother, CLAUDE POWELL, JR., is very poor with only an occasional telephone call. He advised he last saw CLAUDE three years ago when their mother, HEPSIE POWELL, was very ill in Toccoa, Georgia. WENDELL related he had not heard of anyone contacting his brothers, CLAUDE and LEON, and offering them money to assassinate MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., and advised if CLAUDE had seen \$25,000 in one lump sum, CLAUDE would have told others about it. He advised CLAUDE used to drink a lot and talk glibly when in a drunken condition until a doctor told him to restrict his intake of alcohol following an accident.

WENDELL POWELL advised he did not believe CLAUDE and LEON had the capacity to assassinate KING. CLAUDE got the nickname "SHOTGUN" several years ago when a shotgun was taken from him by a policeman after CLAUDE was stopped for driving while intoxicated. WENDELL said neither he nor members of his family liked KING. WENDELL said KING stirred up trouble wherever he went and he and members of his family did not believe in trouble. WENDELL believed KING became a martyr to his people by being assassinated which might not have occurred had he lived. WENDELL stated in addition to being incarcerated by the North Carolina Prison Authorities, he had served time as a juvenile at Boys Town of Georgia, located between Athens and Macon, Georgia. WENDELL said neither he nor members of his family know anything about JAMES EARL RAY other than what they have read in the newspapers, to his knowledge. No members of his family are known to be present or former members of the Ku Klux Klan, or other extremist organizations.

WENDELL POWELL stated he has three brothers, CLAUDE JR., LEON and EDWARD, who reside in Atlanta he believed, place not known, and one sister, FLOYCE BRYSON (wife of JOHN BRYSON), Franklin, North Carolina, and a brother HUBERT, and his mother, HEPSIE, who live side by side in Toccoa, Georgia.

AT 44-2386

FLOYCE POWELL BRYSON, Route Number Five, Box 180, Franklin, North Carolina, was 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 have ever been associated with the Ku Klux Klan or any Black Hate organizations. Likewise, neither have ever spoken against MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

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 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. BRYSON stated the last call made by LEON to BRYSON was several months ago.

BRYSON advised she last saw LEON during Christmas, 1975, and all appeared well.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 1-23-761

HUBERT POWELL, Black Mountain Road, telephone 404-886-4754, was interviewed by SA JIMMIE D. BURRIS who identified himself to him as a Special Agent of the FBI.

HUBERT POWELL was informed by SA BURRIS of the nature of the inquiry and thereafter freely and voluntarily advised as follows:

He advised that he is the older brother of LEON POWELL and CLAUDE POWELL, JR. He stated that approximately one to two weeks ago, exact date unrecalled, WENDELL POWELL, another brother who resides in Belmont, North Carolina, telephoned him and told him that FBI agents had been to talk with him about LEON and CLAUDE.

He also stated that shortly after his talk with WENDELL, LEON telephoned him and, in his opinion, was in a drunken condition. He advised that LEON told him the FBI would probably be by to see him and LEON then added that several years ago, he (LEON) and CLAUDE were in a club in Atlanta when an unknown male individual asked anyone in the club if they were interested in making a lot of money. CLAUDE told the unknown person that he was interested.

According to HUBERT POWELL, LEON told him that some time later on this unknown person came back into the club with a briefcase and that he (LEON) and CLAUDE knew this person meant business. LEON told HUBERT that CLAUDE, at that time, told this person that they were not interested.

HUBERT POWELL stated that he could not recall any other details about the telephone call with LEON, however, he definitely knew that LEON nor CLAUDE had ever mentioned this story to him before.

HUBERT POWELL added that LEON and CLAUDE both liked to drink and talk a lot while drinking.

Interviewed on 1-22-76 at Toccoa, Georgia File # Atlanta 44-2386

by SA JIMMIE D. BURRIS:dd Date dictated 1-22-76

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.

AT 44-2386

2

Mr. POWELL was advised at the outset that any information he furnished could be used in a court of law. He declined to furnish a signed statement.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 1-23-761

Mrs. HEPSIE POWELL, was interviewed at her residence, Anderson Terrace Road, telephone 404-886-4754, by SAs JIMMIE D. BURRIS and DAVID E. PHILLIPS who identified themselves as Special Agents of the FBI.

Mrs. POWELL was informed by SA BURRIS of the nature of the inquiry and thereafter freely and voluntarily advised as follows:

Mrs. POWELL, who is 85 years of age, stated that she is the mother of CLAUDE POWELL, JR. and LEON POWELL. She stated that at no time had her sons ever mentioned to her anything regarding being approached by anyone to make a lot of money.

Mrs. POWELL advised that she felt sure that she would know of the incident if it had happened to her sons, as in her opinion, they would have told her.

Mrs. POWELL could offer nothing further regarding this matter.

Mrs. POWELL was advised at the outset by SA BURRIS that any information she furnished could be used in a court of law. She declined to furnish a signed statement.

Interviewed on 1-10-76 at Toccoa, Georgia File # Atlanta 44-2336
by SA DAVID E. PHILLIPS
SA JIMMIE D. BURRIS :dd Date dictated 1-22-76

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.

AT 44-2386

On January 7, 1976, LEON OWEN POWELL reviewed the FBI Facial Identification Manual in order that an artist's conception of RALPH (Last Name Unknown), might be drawn.

On January 9, 1976, the attached artist's conception was obtained.

On January 22, 1976, LEON OWEN POWELL was recontacted and shown the artist's conception. POWELL advised that some of the grey should be eliminated from the hair and the face should be made shorter; otherwise, the picture is a good likeness of RALPH (Last Name Unknown).

BUT 44-38861 AT 44-2583
1-9-76

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE ATLANTA	OFFICE OF ORIGIN MEMPHIS	DATE 2/3/76	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 1/4/76 - 1/29/76
TITLE OF CASE MURKIN		REPORT MADE BY SA THOMAS J. WILSON	TYPED BY ICW
		CHARACTER OF CASE CIVIL RIGHTS	

REFERENCES: Atlanta teletype to the Bureau, 1/5/76, and
Bureau teletype to Atlanta, 1/6/76.

- P -

ADMINISTRATIVE:

ARNOLD RAY GODFREY, 1105 Lakeshore Drive, Jonesboro, Georgia, telephone 477-5036, was telephonically contacted on 1/16/76, and requested to submit to a polygraph examination at which time he stated "I'm innocent, I don't want to talk to the FBI any further".

GODFREY stated if the FBI is interested in pursuing this matter any further, he will not talk unless the FBI contacts his attorney JACK V. DORSEY, 934-8921, or 633-9607.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS CLAIMED				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE	ACQUIT- TALS	CASE HAS BEEN:
CONVIC.	PRETRIAL DIVERSION	FUG.	FINES	SAVINGS		
						PENDING OVER ONE YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
						PENDING PROSECUTION OVER SIX MONTHS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO

APPROVED	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW
COPIES MADE:		

- 2 - Bureau (44-38861)
- 2 - El Paso (44-920)
- 2 - Memphis (44-1987)
- 2 - Atlanta (44-2386)

WILSON

Dissemination Record of Attached Report				Notations
Agency				
Request Recd.				
Date Fwd.				
How Fwd.				
By				

COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

On 1/19/76, LEON OWEN POWELL, 2786 Alston Drive, Apartment 9, Decatur, Georgia, telephonically contacted the Atlanta Office of the FBI, advising he was sick and desired to postpone his polygraph examination until the week of 1/26 - 30/76.

On 1/29/76, LEON OWEN POWELL voluntarily appeared at the Atlanta Office of the FBI to submit to a polygraph examination. POWELL was advised of his rights by SA JOHN B. REYNOLDS as shown on a warning and waiver of rights form, which he signed after reading. POWELL also executed a consent or waiver to take a polygraph examination form.

On 1/19/76, at 7:45 PM, LEON OWEN POWELL, after executing FD-328 (Polygraph Consent Form), was afforded a polygraph examination in the Atlanta Office of the FBI. Assisting in the collateral interview was SA AUGUST W. BULFER. POWELL, during pre-polygraph interview, substantially furnished the same information as in previous interviews with the 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, JR. POWELL previously stated GODFREY made the statement \$50,000 was to be paid. However, when going over the polygraph questions to be asked him, he requested that the amount be deleted from the question and the words "big money" be substituted for \$50,000. According to POWELL, the conversation with GODFREY came about while they were sitting in Pete's Bar during the fall of 1967, and the conversation was concerning MARTIN LUTHER KING's activities at which time someone stated KING should be killed and POWELL's brother, CLAUDE POWELL, made a statement to the effect that 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 acknowledged 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.

- B -
COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

POWELL stated this white male never 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 of 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 \$2,500 or \$25,000, stated RALPH never did state the amount but he realized that that much money in that size briefcase would have to be at least \$25,000. RALPH also made the statement that there would be "fifty more" when MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., 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 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 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, JR.?". 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".

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

- C -
COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

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 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 more 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 these charts reflects that POWELL responded generally in the same manner to all questions asked with no significant response to any individual question whereby a conclusion could be drawn as to his being truthful or untruthful. Therefore, these polygraph examinations were determined to be inconclusive.

On 1/19/76, at 8:15 PM, CLAUDE POWELL, JR., was afforded a polygraph examination by SA LOREN K. LEE, of the San Antonio Division of the FBI, who was unassisted in the 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 a possible knowledge regarding the unidentified person mentioned in the above questions.

POWELL was left with the impression that results of the polygraph examination were unclear and that the strong possibility existed wherein the FBI would request an additional test in the immediate future. Results of the test were not discussed in any way with POWELL nor was interrogation effected.

LEADS:

ATLANTA DIVISION

- D -
COVER PAGE

AT 44-2386

AT ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

Will recontact LEON OWEN POWELL and display to him revised artist's conception and ascertain if identical with RALPH (Last Name Unknown).

- E* -
COVER PAGE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of: SA THOMAS J. WILSON Office: ATLANTA
Date: FEBRUARY 3, 1976
Field Office File #: 44-2386 Bureau File #: 44-38861
Title: MURKIN

Character: CIVIL RIGHTS

Synopsis:

On 1/4/76, LEON OWEN POWELL interviewed and advised in late October or early November, 1967, he and his brother, CLAUDE POWELL, JR., were approached by a mutual friend, RAY GODFREY, regarding the assassination of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. A week after this initial meeting, an individual named RALPH (LNU), contacted he and his brother and advised them he would pay \$75,000 to assassinate MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. The POWELLS turned the offer down and have not seen RALPH (LNU) since then. CLAUDE POWELL, JR., interviewed at Midland, Texas, and furnished same information. RAY GODFREY located and interviewed and stated he never talked to POWELL brothers about murdering MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., and furthermore, has no knowledge of any individual named RALPH. Other relatives of POWELLS contacted and advised LEON and CLAUDE POWELL are hard drinkers and question veracity of statements.

- P -

DETAILS:

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 1/7/76

LEON OWEN POWELL, a white male, 3841 Austin Drive, Decatur, Georgia, telephone 289-1545 was advised of the identities of the interviewing agents and requested to furnish information that he possessed concerning the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

POWELL was advised of his rights by SA AUGUST W. BULFER as shown on a handwritten warning and waiver of rights form which POWELL executed after reading. POWELL declined to furnish a signed statement, however, he furnished the following information.

During late October or early November, 1967, exact date unknown, during the late afternoon hours he and his brother CLAUDE POWELL, JR., who uses the alias SHOTGUN POWELL, a white male who is currently located at the Scottish Inn, room number unknown, at Midland, Texas, employment unknown, were having a drink in Pete's Bar at Moreland and Confederate Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia.

He and his brother were approached by a mutual friend, RAY GODFREY a white male, approximately 40 years old, 6'1" tall, 220 pounds, auburn hair, country and western singer, employed with the Atlanta Sanitation Department, who asked if he and his brother would be interested in making \$50,000.

During the conversation with GODFREY it was determined that GODFREY could and would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. He and his brother expressed interest in the contract to murder KING. The conversation with GODFREY was terminated and GODFREY told them that they would be contacted concerning the murder contract of KING in the near future.

Interviewed on 1/4/76 at Decatur, Georgia File # Atlanta 44-2386

by SAs THOMAS J. WILSON and AUGUST W. BULFER /bw Date dictated 1/7/76

AT 44-2386

2

Approximately one week after the meeting with GODFREY the POWELL brothers were again drinking in Pete's Bar, exact date unknown, at approximately 4 or 5 PM when they were approached by an individual named RALPH (Last Name Unknown), a white male, heavy set, 6'1" to 6'2", no accent, well groomed, late 40's, well spoken, who he described as a "Lawyer type". RALPH (LNU) who was in possession of a briefcase approached him and his brother, put his briefcase on the table, and said, "I guess you know why I'm here". He and his brother nodded their heads in assent at which time RALPH opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000 and he then said, "If you decide to take the job there's \$50,000 more when it's completed". SHOTGUN POWELL replied to RALPH that he and his brother needed time to think it over, at which time RALPH (LNU) stated, "If your mind is not made up now I can't do business with you". RALPH (LNU) then stood up and nothing else was said. RALPH (LNU) closed his briefcase and left.

POWELL stated that neither he nor his brother observed how RALPH (LNU) came or left the bar and they have not seen RALPH (LNU) since that date.

During the short conversation with RALPH he never actually said that the money being offered to them was to kill MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

He has not had any type of contact with RAY GODFREY in approximately seven years and does not know GODFREY's current location.

The only other individuals aware of he and his brother's meeting with RALPH (LNU) are his former wife, ANNIE LOIS COMPOS, a white female, 4120 Glenwood Road, Apartment A, Atlanta, and PETE DAVIS, a white male, owner of the bar where he and his brother talked with RALPH (LNU).