



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
San Antonio, Texas

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

May 26, 1976

ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The files of the San Antonio Federal Bureau of Investigation Office reflects the following information:

At 8:45 PM, May 14, 1965, Mr. OTIS H. MOORE, Army Serial Number [REDACTED] Company C, Second Battalion, 67th Armor, Second Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas, who resides at 510 Louise, Copperas Cove, Texas, telephonically contacted the FBI Office, San Antonio, Texas, regarding alleged assassination plan of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., related to him by an unknown individual at the S. & S. Club, Temple, Texas, earlier that evening.

Attempts to interview MOORE and details concerning the allegation made by him that same evening were conducted with negative results due to his intoxicated condition. It was decided to hold further interview in abeyance until the following morning.

MOORE's wife, LYDIA MOORE, confidentially advised that evening that her husband frequently becomes intoxicated at which time he misunderstands or misinterprets what people are saying to him. She was of opinion that due to his past behavior little credence should be given to his story.

On May 15, 1965, MOORE was recontacted at which time he advised that at approximately 4:00 PM he went to the S. & S. Club, Temple, Texas, and started drinking. After approximately fifteen or twenty minutes an unknown male, approximately 55 to 60 years old, 6' tall, short gray-black hair, 190 to 200 pounds, wearing an old flannel shirt and khaki pants, came into the bar and sat next to him. After a few minutes MOORE started talking to this individual about Texas and other topics. After a few minutes this man inquired if MOORE was in the Army at Fort Hood as a member of CID (Criminal Investigation Detachment). MOORE told him that he

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44-2386-2460

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was not and "never would be." The other man then began to talk about a "Mr. KING." He said Mr. KING was telling Mr. JOHNSON what to do and that KING would be running the United States next. MOORE then said "no, he'll be stopped before then." The man then asked MOORE if he was acquainted with military artillery and other military weapons and what MOORE's qualifications were on them. MOORE told him he could "split a match right down in half." The man then again asked if MOORE was in CID. MOORE replied "No, but I am in CIA." MOORE explained that he was not really in the CIA, but he just said this to string this man along. The man then said "You are from Panama." MOORE replied, "No, I am from Arkansas, but I have been in Panama." MOORE again explained that he was never really in Panama, but he was again stringing this man along. MOORE said he then got disgusted with this man and tried to terminate the conversation. After approximately ten or fifteen minutes the man again spoke to MOORE making some unrecalled remark about KING and KING's assassination. MOORE asked this man if he knew the movements of this "so called Mr. KING." The man replied that he knew every move KING made and the time and place. MOORE replied, "Well if you know all this, and I am the assassinator, what is my possibility of getting out of it after it's did, and how much money is involved." MOORE again explained that he was stringing this man along, but this time in an attempt to develop some information regarding a possible assassination of KING. The man replied that there was no money involved at the present time. MOORE told him, "Well I have to look after the security and welfare of my family. If I did it, I would have to have \$50,000 and a way out." The man said there was a way out, but no money.

MOORE advised that at this point the man went to the men's room, and he, MOORE, started to leave the club. As he was leaving he asked the man how he could get in touch with him and this man replied "I'm here all the time." MOORE said he then immediately went to his home in Copperas Cove and called the FBI in San Antonio requesting that an Agent contact him.

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During the course of the above interview MOORE repeatedly changed his story and exhibited great difficulty in recalling what had taken place the evening before. He admitted to having at least five or six beers and to being prone to easy intoxication. MOORE further admitted that during the course of his discussion with the above individual, he steered the conversation toward the possible assassination of KING in an attempt to determine if any such assassination plan existed. He was unsuccessful in doing so.

On May 25, 1965, Otis H. Moore, telephoned the San Antonio Federal Bureau of Investigation Office via long distance. Moore stated that he had been beaten up by "a company group" and that he feared his life. Moore requested that the agents who spoke to him the previous week be contacted and advised that the "thing" is now in the open and that the agents would know what this meant. Moore stated that this was important, but would not explain what this matter was about. Moore stated that he resides at 510 Louise Street, Copperas Cove, Texas.

On May 26, 1965, Otis H. Moore was interviewed by SAs Matthew B. Boyhan and Bernard P. Flanigan at Fort Hood Criminal Investigations Detachment Office regarding his telephone call to the San Antonio Federal Bureau of Investigation Office during the evening of May 24, 1965.

Mr. Moore advised that during the evening of May 24, 1965, while at the Fort Hood NCO Club Annex, Belton Lake, at a company (military) party, he became extremely intoxicated and got into a fight with three or four other men over some unrecalled incident. He stated that due to his intoxicated condition he could not remember much of anything that happened, but so far as he knows the fight did not have anything to do with the incident at the S and S Club, Temple, Texas, with regard to the assassination threat of Martin Luther King which he previously reported to SA Boyhan. He does not know why he called the FBI in San Antonio and does not recall informing the FBI clerk that he had been beat up and did not have very long to live, or that he had additional information regarding the incident at the S and S Club.

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Moore said after calling the FBI Office he believes he went straight to his residence in Copperas Cove and "fell into a pretty good sleep". He did not recall hearing the phone ring during the entire evening and he did not awake until the next morning. (SA Boyhan attempted to telephonically contact Moore at his residence on numerous occasions following his telephone call to the San Antonio Office. When no answer was received efforts were discontinued at approximately 10 p.m.)

Moore apologized for calling the FBI Office and advised that he only did so due to his drunken condition. He indicated that there would be no similar incidents in the future.

5/26/76

Airtel

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, SAN ANTONIO (44-1242) (RUC)
SUBJECT: MURKIN

Re Bureau telcall to San Antonio, 5/25/76 and
San Antonio telcall to Bureau, 5/26/76.

Enclosed herewith for the Bureau are four copies
of an LHM captioned "Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr."
and dated 5/26/76.

Enclosed for the information of the Atlanta
Division is one copy of this LHM.

For the information of the Bureau and Atlanta,
the data appearing in enclosed LHM regarding investigation
conducted on 5/14 and 15/65 was set forth in San Antonio
LHM dated 5/17/65 captioned "Alleged Threat to Life of
Martin Luther King, Jr.", (Bufile: 100-10667); (SAfile:
100-9838).

2 - Bureau (Enc. 4)
① - Atlanta (44-2386) (Enc. 1) (Info)
1 - San Antonio
JMK/byl
(4)

44-2386-2481

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JUN 1 1976	
FBI - ATLANTA	

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R 261715Z NOV 76

FM DIRECTOR

TO ALL SACS ROUTINE

BT

C L E A R

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

FOR INFORMATION OF RECIPIENTS, AT THE CLOSE OF THE 94TH CONGRESS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CREATED A SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS TO INVESTIGATE THE DEATHS OF JOHN F. KENNEDY AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. THIS COMMITTEE AND THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, HAVE REACHED AN AGREEMENT STIPULATING THAT ALL COMMITTEE REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO FBI FILES AND PERSONNEL WILL BE MADE IN WRITING TO THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS.

IT IS NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE HAVE SOUGHT ON THEIR OWN TO INTERVIEW DEPARTMENTAL EMPLOYEES KNOWLEDGEABLE REGARDING THE KENNEDY AND KING INVESTIGATIONS. SIMILAR EFFORTS MAY BE DIRECTED TOWARD FBI FIELD OFFICES

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66-2242*

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SERIALIZED _____
INDEXED _____
44-2386

PAGE TWO CLEAR

AND HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL. IF SUCH CONTACTS OCCUR, YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO REFER THE CONTACTING HOUSE COMMITTEE OFFICIAL TO THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS OF THE DEPARTMENT OR TO FBIHQ. ATTEMPTS BY THE COMMITTEE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION THROUGH YOUR PERSONNEL OR ANY OTHER MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE SHOULD BE FURNISHED PROMPTLY TO FBIHQ, ATTENTION CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY UNIT, GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION.

FOR YOUR FURTHER INFORMATION, IN THE EVENT PERSONNEL ARE CONTACTED FOR PURPOSE OF INTERVIEW OR TESTIMONY, REFER TO MY LETTER, NUMBER 1-75, DATED MAY 28, 1975, CAPTIONED "MEMORANDUM TO ALL EMPLOYEES; RE: INTERVIEWS OF FBI EMPLOYEES." THIS MEMORANDUM DETAILS EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION AS OUTLINED IN THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, AND THE FBI EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT, WHICH REQUIRE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY BEFORE FURNISHING INFORMATION, TESTIMONY OR RECORD MATERIAL.

RECIPIENTS ARE ALSO REMINDED THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR DESTRUCTION OF FILES AND RECORDS PROGRAM, RECORDS POSSESSING EVIDENTIARY, INTELLIGENCE OR HISTORICAL VALUE, SUCH AS THE KENNEDY AND KING ASSASSINATION INVESTIGATIONS ARE

PAGE THREE CLEAR

EXCLUDED FROM THE FILE DESTRUCTION PROGRAM AND CANNOT BE
DESTROYED.

ALL LEGATS ADVISED SEPARATELY.

BT

PLS RETURN TO TALK

BXQSZKOH

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

CHANGES REPORT**Bell Has Doubts
In King Slaying**

By NANCY LEWIS

Journal Washington Bureau

SEATTLE — Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell says he wonders whether there was a conspiracy in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In a Sunday interview Bell said he has ordered changed a Justice Department report which concluded there was no conspiracy because he didn't think that conclusion was justified.

The report that contained the conclusion was supposed to deal with the FBI's performance in the investigation of King's death, Bell said, and shouldn't have contained any conclusion on the question of conspiracy.

Furthermore, Bell made it clear he didn't think the information in the report supported the no-conspiracy view and said he personally still has questions about the matter.

The original rough draft of the Justice Department's report did contain the conclusion that James Earl Ray acted alone in the April 4, 1968, slaying of King.

This aspect of the report was made public after former Atty. Gen. Edward Levi provided three copies to congressional leaders.

Bell described the conclusion as a gratuitous one.

"If there was a conclusion reached . . . I'd say it was extraneous," Bell said. The report ought to be factual and not contain "gossip" about people, he said.

For this reason Bell said the final draft of the report will be restricted to assessing the FBI's performance in the investigation of King's slaying.

This has been questioned because of subsequent revelations that for several years up until the time of his death the FBI conducted a surveillance and harassment campaign against King.

Bell said the report was to focus on two main points: whether there was cause for surveillance and "if so, when did that terminate," as well as the actual assessment of the investigation.

The interview with Bell came after an appearance on the CBS program Face the Nation during which he explained "this report is couched in the terms of assessing the performance of the FBI and was not designed to reach a conclusion. If you read the report, you can lean to either side. You could say there is no evidence of a conspiracy, but you would wonder, you know, if there was," Bell said.

He clearly indicated that he wonders.

Bell said he has several questions, among them whether convicted assassin Ray "had the mental capacity to do that traveling himself. (Ray used an extensive and complicated travel plan to escape the United States after King's murder.) That puzzles me. He'd been in the penitentiary most of his life" and had minimal schooling, Bell pointed out.

Bell said he has had material about Ray's IQ inserted into what will become the final report.

He indicated that report probably will be made public saying, "I want everybody to be able to read the report to, make up their own minds about it."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page 8-A
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL
Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-14-77
Edition: Evening
Author: Nancy Lewis
Editor: Jack Spalding
Title: MURKIN

Character:
or
Classification: 44-386
Submitting Office: ATLANTA
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FBI-ATLANTA	

Asked specifically if there was a conspiracy, Bell said, "Nobody was assigned that question. If I want to assign it, I'll do it later."

Bell said he would wait to see what a pending House of Representatives investigation of the King and President John F. Kennedy assassinations will do on the matter before he acts further.

Bell is in Seattle to attend the mid-winter meeting of the American Bar Association. He was expected to ask the convening House of Delegates Monday to defer its planned recommendation that attorneys be allowed in the room when their clients testify before a grand jury.

Bell said he would like an opportunity to study the matter further but emphasized that he does not believe attorneys should be allowed before grand juries.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Answer King Questions

Who really was
Dr. Martin Lu-



... recently on
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FBI in deter-
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a conspiracy
of civil rights

... ed the report,
to either side
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... I added that
to release the re-

port — "I wanted everybody to be
able to read the report, make their
own minds up about it."

It is imperative to the national
well-being that this report is released
in full — especially since the House
Assassinations Committee has self-de-
structed in disgusting conflict between
its chairman, Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez,
and its chief counsel, Richard
Sprague.

I am among those who cannot
understand where Ray got the money
for the automobile he allegedly used
to leave the Memphis assassination
scene, or for the airline tickets he
used to flee to Europe. I am con-
vinced that someone or some agency
with experience in forging passports
and other documents assisted him in
providing the phony travel papers he
used.

Very clearly the FBI is suspect.
Bell as much as said this when he said
the report he referred to was
"couched in terms of assessing the job
... that the FBI did."

It has been established that the late
FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover de-
tested Dr. King. He had his telephones
tapped, his hotel rooms bugged, he
placed him under physical surveil-
lance, he sent squads of rumormon-
gers around the nation to try to

(Indicate page, name of
newspaper, city and state.)

Page 4-A
THE
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-18-77
Edition: Morning
Author: Carl Rowan
Editor: Hal Gulliver
Title: MURKIN

Character:

or

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Submitting Office: ATLANTA

☐ Being Investigated

blacken King's reputation with the media and other opinion-makers. Most despicable of all, we know that Hoover's FBI tried to induce King to commit suicide by mailing to his wife, Coretta King, a tape recording suggesting misconduct by the black leader.

While James Earl Ray was fleeing, some FBI operatives were trying to pull me the spurious line that the Russians had killed King because of some hitch in his relations with "Soviet spies."

We may never know the truth — but we must search for it. Bell must release to the public every word of that report about the FBI's performance.

House Speaker Thomas (Tip) O'Neill should see that the Gonzalez committee is disbanded in entirety, and that another investigative committee with a totally new staff is named.

There is now no way the current committee can say anything to the American public that would be believable.

Yet, Atty. Gen. Bell's comments make it clear that some committee or some official is going to have to say far more about King's murder than has been said to the people up till now.

Ray Lawyer Wants to Meet Bell

*'It's got to be tied in some way to a trial
for James Earl Ray.'*

—Attorney James Lesar

By NANCY LEWIS

Constitution Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - James Earl Ray's attorney said Thursday he wants to talk with Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell about his desire to interview the confessed assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The attorney, James Lesar of Washington, made it clear in an interview that his own desire is to get a trial for Ray and that any interview will have to be linked with that.

"It's got to be tied in some way to a trial for James Earl Ray," Lesar said. "I'm convinced that Ray is in jail wrongfully. The only way I know to get him out of jail without an admission of guilt on his part is to have a trial."

Lesar, who said he has represented Ray without pay since 1970, said it would probably be "several weeks" before he could get all the information together to present to Bell.

The attorney general told reporters at a breakfast meeting Thursday that he would like to personally interview Ray in an effort to resolve still unanswered questions in connection with King's murder April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tenn.

"There's always been some desire on my part to interview Ray," Bell said. "I'd like to find out where he got his money and his travel documents. I don't think we're going to find out except from Ray."

Asked if he might favor "legal consideration" for Ray in exchange for

information, Bell said he would "if I believed he was telling the truth."

To determine that, Bell said he would "want to meet with him myself" or send a top Justice Department official "in whom I have complete confidence and who knows how to interrogate or negotiate."

Then, Bell said, he would decide about possible legal consideration for Ray "if I came to the conclusion he wanted to make a clean break."

Bell's comments came less than a week after his release of an extensive Justice Department review of the entire King murder investigation which indicated Ray acted alone, but didn't conclusively rule out the possibility of a conspiracy.

The biggest question the seven-person task force wasn't able to answer was where Ray got his money between his escape from the Missouri State Penitentiary in April, 1967, and his capture in London in June, 1968, 65 days after the killing.

Ray, now serving a 99-year sen-

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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THE
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Georgia

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force in the Brushy Mountain Penitentiary in Petros, Tenn., has never been interviewed extensively by the FBI or the Justice Department, according to a spokesman for the department.

When Ray was captured in London, his attorney said he didn't want to be interviewed and so there was no attempt to talk with him there, the spokesman said.

The FBI was told that he might talk on the flight back to the United States after his extradition, but he wouldn't talk then either.

Ray was turned over to Tennessee authorities upon his return and he was not interviewed then, either. On March 10, 1969, Ray agreed to plead guilty in exchange for the 99-year sentence.

Immediately after that, the assistant attorney general in charge of civil rights instructed the FBI to attempt to interview Ray, the spokesman said. The FBI did meet with Ray on March 13 and March 14, 1969, according to FBI files, but he "provided no pertinent information." The spokesman said Ray simply would not talk with them about the case.

The task force which reviewed the case wrote Ray on Dec. 15, 1976 that they would like to interview him. Although he did not answer the task force directly, in a Dec. 20, 1976 letter to Lesar, Ray said, he agreed with "your advice opposing the interview." "At the present I believe the only body I should testify before is a jury," Ray said.

In a letter to New York Times columnist Anthony Lewis revealed 10 days later, Ray reportedly volunteered to testify under oath to the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

But Lesar said Thursday that was really a jab at the news media, not a legitimate offer to testify. Lesar said Ray was angered over favorable reviews given a book on the King murder — George McMillan's "The Making of An Assassin"—and that the offer was actually a sarcastic challenge, in essence that he would talk to the committee after Lewis and some other reporters did.

"Quite obviously there would be no reason to call them," Lesar said. "It was a jab at the news media for carrying uncritical and glowing accounts of a childish book."

Lesar said he has corresponded with Ray several times since then and that

Ray has made general comments about the offer to testify, but nothing he would divulge.

A spokesman for the House committee said Thursday it has reached no agreements for Ray to testify. Bell said he will wait to see what the House probe turns up before he launches a Justice Department investigation.

Ray has been seeking a trial in the King case since shortly after he confessed to the murder. His pleas have been turned down by the Tennessee courts and those decisions have been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

But Justice Department sources Thursday would not rule out a trial for Ray if they could be convinced there is new evidence that would answer some of the lingering questions. That might be the type of "legal consideration" Bell could offer. Bell said he will coordinate any efforts with Tennessee authorities.

Lesar contends that "Ray was set up by the persons who conspired to shoot Dr. King, to take the rap for a crime he did not commit."

The attorney said Ray "did not willingly participate in the conspiracy and that he did not shoot Dr. King."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Bell Wants Talk With King Killer

By NANCY LEWIS

Journal Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — U.S. Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell said Thursday he would like to interview convicted assassin James Earl Ray personally.

Bell also said he would consider giving Ray "legal consideration" in return for the truth about what he knows about the April 1968 murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Bell's comments came at a breakfast with reporters and followed by one week the release of an extensive review of the King murder investigation. The review left unresolved several mysteries about the case.

Ray steadfastly has refused interviews both to the Justice Department and reporters in recent years, but in late December 1976 he did offer to testify before the House Select Committee on Assassinations. There has been no agreement for Ray to testify before the committee, which would want him to testify under oath, a committee spokesman said Thursday.

"There's always been some desire on my part to interview Ray," Bell said.

"I'd like to find out where he got his money and his travel documents. I don't think we're going to find out except from Ray," Bell said.

Asked whether he would be willing to give

'I'd like to find out where he got his money and his travel documents. I don't think we're going to find out except from Ray.'

—Griffin Bell

Ray legal consideration for telling what he knows, Bell said he would, "If I believed he was telling the truth."

Bell said he would "want to meet with him myself" or send a top Justice Department official "in whom I have complete confidence and who knows how to interrogate or negotiate."

After such preliminary interviews, Bell indicated, he would decide about possible legal grants to Ray "if I came to the conclusion he wanted to make a clean break."

Bell said he had been "puzzled over the case ever since that slaying" and that he would like to have the answers "as an American citizen."

Since Ray is a state prisoner, Bell said, any negotiations with him would have to be "worked out with the state of Tennessee." Bell said he

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page 1-A
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL
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Ray would prefer to wait to see what the select committee does about the King case first.

Ray recently refused to talk with members of the Justice Department task force reviewing the King investigation. In a Dec. 15 letter to Ray at Brushy Mountain Penitentiary in Petros, Tenn., a member of that task force asked for an interview "to take place not later than Dec. 31, 1976."

Although Ray did not respond directly to the task force, in a letter dated Dec. 20, 1976, to his attorney James H. Lesar, Ray said "I agree with your advice opposing the interview."

"At the present I believe the only body I should testify before is a jury," Ray's letter said.

A few days later, he apparently changed his mind. In a letter to New York Times columnist Anthony Lewis, disclosed Dec. 30, 1976, Ray said he was ready to testify under oath before the House committee.

At the time, Lesar said the offer to testify was made without his knowledge. He could not be reached Thursday for comment.

Ray pleaded guilty to the murder of King on March 10, 1969, in exchange for a 99-year sentence.

He has been trying since shortly after that to have that conviction overturned on grounds that the guilty plea was coerced.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

WAS KING SECURITY STRIPPED?

by Wayne Chastain

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. may have been the victim of "security stripping"—a technique used by intelligence agencies to expose a victim to assassination by removing his protection—involving the Memphis police and possibly a federal intelligence agency.

This is the theory that last year convinced the House of Representatives to create a special 12-member committee to probe both the 1968 King murder and the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The new information was provided by two investigators: Mark Lane, author of the best-selling book on the JFK assassination, *Rush to Judgment*, and Abby Mann, an Academy Award-winning screenwriter and author of *Judgment in Nuremberg*.

Removals, Transfers

They and *Newsday* reporter Les Payne found, in scores of interviews with those involved in the King investigation, that:

Ed Redditt, the black Memphis police detective in charge of protecting King, was removed from his post across the street from the motel where King was shot just two hours before the slaying. Redditt told me he had set up a contingency plan to seal off the area in the event of violence, but it "was never implemented."

Director of the Police Department Frank Holloman—a former FBI agent of 25 years—told the detective that he, Redditt, was being removed because of a murder plot against him had been discovered. After being taken home and watched by Memphis police for two days, Redditt was put back on duty—and never heard another word about the murder plot.

Because Holloman had told him of the plot in the company of a man he identified as a Secret Service agent,

Redditt assumed "that Holloman had gotten this information from the Secret Service." But that agency denies having any record of sending an agent to the meeting.

Representatives from the FBI, military intelligence, National Guard and other agencies were there, however.

Redditt's assistant told investigator Mark Lane that he too had left the command post opposite King's hotel before the slaying, but refused to discuss the circumstances surrounding his removal.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page 1
CREATIVE LOAFING
Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-26-77
Edition: Weekly
Author: W. Chastain
Editor: Deborah Eason
Title: MURKIN

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An informal security force of four members of a local black militant group, including one undercover Memphis police agent, was also relieved from duty just before the murder—by someone in the King entourage. Stationed with arms on the same floor as King, they were already downstairs when the shooting took place.

The only two black firemen assigned to the fire station across from King's hotel—Redditt's command post—were also "stripped away."

Both were temporarily transferred to other stations the night before the murder. One, Floyd Newsum, told Lane that the deputy chief of the Fire Department told him the transfer order had come from Memphis Police.

According to Redditt, "The FBI never talked to me about this even though I told my story to anyone willing to answer." And Newsum says he has never been questioned by a law enforcement agency about his forced removal.

Atlanta Squad

Arthur Murtagh, a former FBI agent in Atlanta, has stated that agents in the Atlanta office "literally jumped for joy" when they learned King had been assassinated. He said the FBI intelligence squad in Atlanta—King's home town—was assigned "to somehow or other get King, to bring him down, break him or destroy him."

After the murder, Lane says, the same Atlanta intelligence squad was assigned by Director J. Edgar Hoover to head the investigation. "My superiors, both in the Atlanta bureau and Washington," Murtagh told me, "washed out leads suggesting a right-wing conspiracy."

"Had a more thorough investigation been conducted by the FBI, I believe links would have been established between the King assassination and the Kennedy murders—both those of JFK and RFK," he contended.

In our interview, Redditt pointed to another area he thought should be investigated. He says he learned after the assassination that the Memphis police had heavily in-

filtrated the Invaders, a black militant organization which was directly responsible for King's return to Memphis. Newsday's Les Payne has reported that police and FBI informants may have played a part in violence perpetrated by the group.

The Invaders had organized the disruption of a massive Memphis march led by King a week before the shooting. The group launched a riot that killed one, injured scores and led to 238 arrests. After the violence, apparently intended by the militant group to discredit King, the non-violent leader vowed to return, in order to prove he could still lead a peaceful demonstration.

"Dr. King would never have returned to Memphis if the violence had not happened," according to the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a key King aide. "We never intended to get bogged down in Memphis."

Ray: Set Up & Sucked In

Newsday has reported that, according to a former Invader leader, a Memphis policeman who had infiltrated the group "was one of the most provocative members of the Invaders," very active in planning confrontation.

That undercover agent, according to both Newsday and Redditt, was one of the four Invaders in King's informal security force, created by an agreement between King's staff and the Invaders on his return trip to Memphis.

"He (the agent) left the police department shortly after (the shooting)," Redditt told me, "and the word was that he went to Washington, D.C. Then a couple of years after the King slaying I ran face to face with him in downtown Memphis. He was wearing a disguise."

Redditt says he stopped him. At first, the man pretended he was someone else, but finally acknowledged he was the man Redditt thought he was.

"He acted very mysterious, saying that he was now with the Central Intelligence Agency, and begged me not to blow his cover," according to Redditt.

The congressional decision to probe the King murder follows years of efforts to puncture the official version of how he was killed. Just a day after pleading guilty, the alleged assassin James Earl Ray tried to reverse his plea to not guilty, arguing that he had been tricked into pleading guilty by his lawyer in order to escape the death penalty.

In 1975, Ray told Pacific News Service, "I was set up and sucked in." He charged that his orders to drive to Memphis—because they came three days before King publicly announced he would return there—"could only have come from either someone in King's own camp or some high Justice Department official having access to

information gained from wiretaps on King's telephones in Atlanta."

Testimony in federal court in a hearing on Ray's motion for a new trial also raised questions about the official version of events. Ballistics expert Dr. Herbert Lynn MacDonnell, professor of criminology at Elmira College in New York, testified that Ray's rifle could not have been used to fire the fatal shot.

"... agents in the Atlanta (FBI) office 'literally jumped for joy' when they learned King had been assassinated."

And Ted Ghormley, who was county deputy sheriff when King was killed, testified that the key piece of evidence against Ray—a bundle of his belongings the state said was left by Ray at the rooming house as he fled the scene—was actually placed where it was found before the assassination.

The state of Tennessee has in fact never produced an eyewitness linking Ray with the rooming house from which they contend the shot was fired, according to his former lawyers.

Wayne Chastain is a veteran newspaper reporter who while writing for the Memphis Press-Scimitar was one of the first reporters on the scene after Dr. Martin Luther King was shot. He has now investigated the King murder for over eight years, becoming in 1973 the first reporter from a major metropolitan daily to obtain an interview with convicted King assassin James Earl Ray.

Pacific News Service (APS Hartford Advocate)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI-King Report Criticized

The U.S. Justice Department is attempting to hamper a congressional investigation into the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., an official of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) charged Saturday.

Tyrone Brooks, SCLC national communications director, made the allegations in criticizing a new Justice Department report which calls the FBI investigation into King's slaying an honest and thorough effort.

He is disturbed about the release of the report "at the same time the House Select Committee on Assassinations is trying to get its investigation off the ground," Brooks said, charging the report is "designed to hinder the select committee."

He also said a conflict of interest exists in the department reviewing the work of the FBI, which is an agency of the department.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state)

Page 4-1
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL
& CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-20-77
Edition: Sunday
Author:
Editor: Spalding/Gulliver
Title: MURKIN

Character:

or

Classification: 44-2386-
Submitting Office: ATLANTA

☐ Being Investigated

44-2386-2402

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 21 1977	
FBI - ATLANTA	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Report Says Ray 'Probably Acted Alone' in King Slaying

By NANCY LEWIS

Constitution Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — An extensive Justice department review of the FBI's investigation of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. says convicted murderer James Earl Ray probably acted alone. But the report doesn't say that conclusively.

Nor does the 149-page report clear up recurring questions on how King came to be murdered on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tenn.

Nevertheless, it finds that "the investigation by the FBI to ascertain and capture the murderer (of King) was thoroughly, honestly, and successfully conducted."

The review was ordered after revelations that at the time of King's death and for six years before that, the FBI had waged a smear campaign against the civil rights leader.

The report also says that the surveillance of King by the FBI was probably justified when it began in 1962, but that it should not have continued beyond 1963. There was some evidence linking top King aides to the U.S. Communist party, which triggered FBI interest in their influence on King.

The Justice department report was immediately attacked in Atlanta by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which King founded.

"We don't have any faith in that report because it seems the FBI and the Justice department to a degree were in-

involved in the assassination or the events leading up to it," said Tyrone Brooks, national communications director for SCLC.

The SCLC spokesman said he had more faith in a congressional investigation planned by the House Committee on Assassinations.

A seven-member task force reviewed more than 200,000 pieces of evidence compiled in the King case in preparing the Justice department report. It recommended no criminal indictments because the five-year statute of limitations had expired and no disciplinary action because all the principals involved in the FBI surveillance have died or retired.

The task force reviewed the evi-

dence pointing to the guilt of James Earl Ray as the man who purchased the murder gun and who fired the fatal shot to be conclusive," the report states.

It found no evidence of any complicity by the FBI or the Memphis Police Department in King's death and added: "The sum of all the evidence of Ray's guilt points to him so exclusively that it most effectively makes the point that no one else was involved."

According to the report, someone "could conceivably have provided (Ray) with logistics, or even paid him to commit the crime. However, we have found no competent evidence upon which to base such a theory."

Originally, the report states unequivocally that Ray had acted alone.

But this firm conclusion was altered at the direction of Attorney General Griffin Bell, who maintained the report did not justify that conclusion.

As Bell put it last Sunday: "I think if you read the report, you could lean to either side. You could say there is no evidence of a conspiracy but you could wonder . . . if there was."

Bell specifically raised questions about Ray's mental capability of carrying out his complex escape plan following the shooting. He inserted Ray's IQ in the report. It is 105, just above normal.

The report does not say where the money came from with which Ray supported himself between his escape from the Missouri State Prison on April 23, 1967, and the day he shot King.

"The sources for Ray's funds still remain a mystery today," the report says. The report also criticizes the FBI for abandoning "a significant opportunity" to question members of Ray's family.

Bell said that the report was not aimed at determining whether there was in fact a conspiracy to murder King. He added that he wanted to see what comes of a House investigation into the King assassination.

The original surveillance of King was authorized by the late Robert Kennedy, then attorney general. Wiretaps were subsequently placed on King's home phone and at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference headquarters in Atlanta.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state)

Page 2-A
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL
& CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-19-77
Edition: Saturday
Author: Nancy Lewis
Editor: Spalding/Gulliver
Title: MURKIN

Character:

or

Classification: 44-2386-
Submitting Office: ATLANTA

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 22 1977	
FBI-ATLANTA	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Changes Report, Says Plot Question Is Open

House of Representatives investigation will do before he moves to answer questions associated with the King killing.

Specifically mentioned Sunday was whether or not Ray alone could have devised the intricate escape plan he used following King's murder April 4, 1968.

Bell said he had some questions about "if Ray had the mental capacity to do that traveling himself. That puzzled me. He'd been in the penitentiary most of his life," Bell said, adding that he also had only minimal schooling.

The attorney general said he had specifically asked for Ray's IQ and has included it in what will become the final report. He did not disclose the IQ, however.

The report itself was not supposed to reach any type of conclusion on the conspiracy matter, but instead was supposed to assess the performance of the FBI in the King assassination investigation based on information revealed since then that the FBI had conducted a harassment and surveillance campaign against King.

Bell has "restricted the report to what it was assigned to do," he said. That was to determine the "cause for surveillance and if there was one when did that terminate" and the merits of the FBI's investigation of

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page 12-A

THE

ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-14-77

Edition: Morning

Author: Nancy Lewis

Editor: Hal Gulliver

Title: MURKIN

Character: 44-

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: ATLANTA

☐ Being Investigated

44-2386-111
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

FEB 14 1977

FBI - ATLANTA

the slaying.

"If there was a conclusion reached...I'd say it was extraneous," Bell said and then changed his description of it to gratuitous.

The original report on the Justice department study of the FBI was made under former Attorney General Edward Levi who had sent three copies to congressional leaders.

"I hadn't even seen the report" when the first stories broke, Bell said. However, the attorney general did get a copy of the report immediately and studied it two weekends ago when he was in Atlanta on personal business.

Bell ordered the changes after that and indicated Sunday that there were several others but he did not disclose them.

In response to questions on "Face the Nation," Bell explained "this report is couched in terms of assessing the performance of the FBI and was not designed to reach a conclusion. If you read the report you can lean to either side. You could say there is no evidence of a conspiracy, but you could wonder, you know, if there was," Bell said.

He indicated he probably will make the final report public, but would not say definitively if he would.

"I want everybody to be able to read the report to make up their own minds about it," said Bell.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

10 Years After

Next April will mark the 10th anniversary of Martin Luther King's murder in Memphis. And after all these years much of the world still is nagged by unanswered questions.

A man is in prison serving a 99-year sentence but even James Earl Ray's conviction for murder is tainted by his demand for another trial and by so much he apparently has left unsaid.

The questions are bothersome. Was there a conspiracy? Ten years later we still are asking that question. It is a legitimate question in view of the racist wrath King's civil rights activity inspired. The FBI investigated. Then the Justice Department investigated the FBI investigation.

But. But nobody yet has answered the question of where Ray got his traveling money and his money for expensive purchases. Money he spent between the time he escaped prison in

1967 and the time he was arrested in London in June 1968, two months after the King assassination. Where did he get the money? (The FBI speculates robberies kept Ray supplied with cash. But that's speculation.) U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell is one of the people asking the question.

Bell says, "I'd either want to speak to Ray myself or send one of my skilled people who know how to negotiate and interrogate. If we came to the conclusion he was making a clean breast, then we'd see about (some) consideration."

A new trial is likely to be part of the consideration Bell mentioned. Seems like it would be worth it if that would mean answering the nagging questions about the King killing. If there is any way to put this matter behind us, it lies in the path Bell is contemplating.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page 4-A
THE
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Georgia

Date: 2-28-77
Edition: Morning
Author: Editorial
Editor: Hal Gulliver
Title: MURKIN

Character:

or

Classification: 44-

Submitting Office: ATLANTA

☐ Being Investigated

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

WAS KING SECURITY STRIPPED?

by Wayne Chastain

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. may have been the victim of "security stripping"—a technique used by intelligence agencies to expose a victim to assassination by removing his protection—involving the Memphis police and possibly a federal intelligence agency.

This is the theory that last year convinced the House of Representatives to create a special 12-member committee to probe both the 1968 King murder and the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The new information was provided by two investigators: Mark Lane, author of the best-selling book on the JFK assassination, *Rush to Judgment*, and Abby Mann, an Academy Award-winning screenwriter and author of *Judgment in Nuremberg*.

Removals, Transfers

They and *Newsday* reporter Les Payne found, in scores of interviews with those involved in the King investigation, that:

Ed Redditt, the black Memphis police detective in charge of protecting King, was removed from his post across the street from the motel where King was shot just two hours before the slaying. Redditt told me he had set up a contingency plan to seal off the area in the event of violence, but it "was never implemented."

Director of the Police Department Frank Holloman—a former FBI agent of 25 years—told the detective that he, Redditt, was being removed because of a murder plot against him had been discovered. After being taken home and watched by Memphis police for two days, Redditt was put back on duty—and never heard another word about the murder plot.

Because Holloman had told him of the plot in the company of a man he identified as a Secret Service agent,

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

"Creative Loafing"

pages 1 & 2

2/26/77

Date:

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

44-2386 - 2401

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 10 1977	
FBI - ATLANTA	

Redditt assumed "that Holloman had gotten this information from the Secret Service." But that agency denies having any record of sending an agent to the meeting.

Representatives from the FBI, military intelligence, National Guard and other agencies were there, however.

Redditt's assistant told investigator Mark Lane that he too had left the command post opposite King's hotel before the slaying, but refused to discuss the circumstances surrounding his removal.

An informal security force of four members of a local black militant group, including one undercover Memphis police agent, was also relieved from duty just before the murder—by someone in the King entourage. Stationed with arms on the same floor as King, they were already downstairs when the shooting took place.

The only two black firemen assigned to the fire station across from King's hotel—Redditt's command post—were also "stripped away."

Both were temporarily transferred to other stations the night before the murder. One, Floyd Newsum, told Lane that the deputy chief of the Fire Department told him the transfer order had come from Memphis Police.

According to Redditt, "The FBI never talked to me about this even though I told my story to anyone willing to answer." And Newsum says he has never been questioned by a law enforcement agency about his forced removal.

Atlanta Squad

Arthur Murtagh, a former FBI agent in Atlanta, has stated that agents in the Atlanta office "literally jumped for joy" when they learned King had been assassinated. He said the FBI intelligence squad in Atlanta—King's home town—was assigned "to somehow or other get King, to bring him down, break him or destroy him."

After the murder, Lane says, the same Atlanta intelligence squad was assigned by Director J. Edgar Hoover to head the investigation. "My superiors, both in the Atlanta bureau and Washington," Murtagh told me, "washed out leads suggesting a right-wing conspiracy."

"Had a more thorough investigation been conducted by the FBI, I believe links would have been established between the King assassination and the Kennedy murders—both those of JFK and RFK," he contended.

In our interview, Redditt pointed to another area he thought should be investigated. He says he learned after the assassination that the Memphis police had heavily in-

filtrated the Invaders, a black militant organization which was directly responsible for King's return to Memphis. Newsday's Les Payne has reported that police and FBI informants may have played a part in violence perpetrated by the group.

The Invaders had organized the disruption of a massive Memphis march led by King a week before the shooting. The group launched a riot that killed one, injured scores and led to 238 arrests. After the violence, apparently intended by the militant group to discredit King, the non-violent leader vowed to return, in order to prove he could still lead a peaceful demonstration.

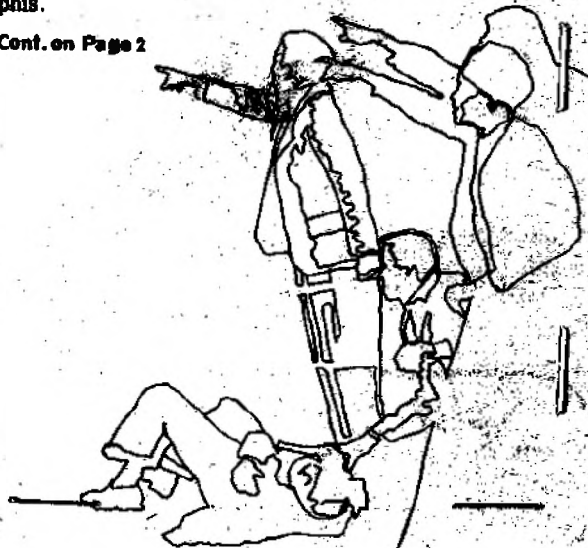
"Dr. King would never have returned to Memphis if the violence had not happened," according to the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a key King aide. "We never intended to get bogged down in Memphis."

Ray: Set Up & Sucked In

Newsday has reported that, according to a former Invader leader, a Memphis policeman who had infiltrated the group "was one of the most provocative members of the Invaders," very active in planning confrontation.

That undercover agent, according to both Newsday and Redditt, was one of the best Invaders in King's informal security force, creating an agreement between King's staff and the Invaders on his return trip to Memphis.

Cont. on Page 2



KING

From Page 1



"He (the agent) left the police department shortly after (the shooting)," Redditt told me, "and the word was that he went to Washington, D.C. Then a couple of years after the King slaying I ran face to face with him in downtown Memphis. He was wearing a disguise."

Redditt says he stopped him. At first, the man pretended he was someone else, but finally acknowledged he was the man Redditt thought he was.

"He acted very mysterious, saying that he was now with the Central Intelligence Agency, and begged me not to blow his cover," according to Redditt.

The congressional decision to probe the King murder follows years of efforts to puncture the official version of how he was killed. Just a day after pleading guilty, the alleged assassin James Earl Ray tried to reverse his plea to not guilty, arguing that he had been tricked into pleading guilty by his lawyer in order to escape the death penalty.

In 1975, Ray told Pacific News Service, "I was set up and sucked in." He charged that his orders to drive to Memphis—because they came three days before King publicly announced he would return there—"could only have come from either someone in King's own camp or some high Justice Department official having access to

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"... agents in the Atlanta (FBI) office 'literally jumped for joy' when they learned King had been assassinated."

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The state of Tennessee has in fact never produced an eyewitness linking Ray with the rooming house from which they contend the shot was fired, according to his former lawyers.

Wayne Chastain is a veteran newspaper reporter who while writing for the Memphis Press-Scimitar was one of the first reporters on the scene after Dr. Martin Luther King was shot. He has now investigated the King murder for over eight years. He is the first reporter from a major metropolitan area to obtain an interview with convicted King assassin James Earl Ray.

Pacific News Service (APSHartford Advocate)

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, ATLANTA

FROM : SC THOMAS E. KELLEY

SUBJECT: MARK LANE

DATE: 5-12-77

On 5-12-77, LANE, 105 2nd Street, NE, Washington, D.C., telephone 202-546-7500, after concluding an interview with PAUL SHIELDS, TV 5, outside the main entrance to the Atlanta Office, approached the counter and stated he had a complaint to file and wanted to talk to the Special Agent in Charge.

LANE presented his complaint to the writer while PAUL SHIELDS was present. At the outset LANE played a tape which was approximately 1½ - 2 minutes in length stating it was a recorded interview of ARTHUR MURTAUGH, former SA of Atlanta Div., presently practicing law and teaching in Constable, N.Y.

MURTAUGH was describing events at the time it was announced that KING had been shot and killed. There were no other voices on the tape and the voice attributed to MURTAUGH sounded identical to the writer's recollection of MURTAUGH.

MURTAUGH stated he and the relief supervisor of the squad were walking down the hall to place their salmon cards in the slot which told they were going home and it was either five till six or five till seven when the announcement was made over the radio in the office that KING had been shot. The relief supervisor was described as jumping for joy and exclaiming how they got the commie son of a bitch. MURTAUGH states how the discussion with this unnamed relief supervisor continued while they walked to the parking area about three blocks from the office. MURTAUGH used a great number of flashy adjectives in his description but always ended in stating "or something to that effect".

At the conclusion of the tape LANE remarked that the writer was not taking notes and inquired as to if the room was bugged. LANE was advised that the room was not bugged and that it was more important that I listen to the tape in order to determine what is said and that if he would furnish the question he would like answered and a location

2 - Atlanta
/tek



5010-108

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FBI-ATLANTA

where he could be contacted that the questions would be made available to the SAC.

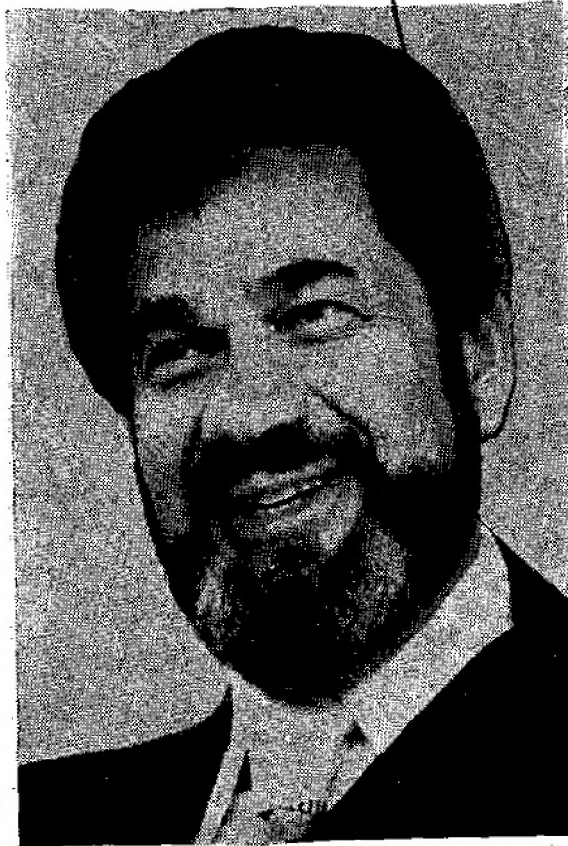
1) Who the relief supervisor reffered to by MURTAUGH is and is he still employed by the FBI

2) Was any punitive action taken against the individual and did the FBI condone its employees acting in such a manner over the death of an ~~innocent~~ individual.

LANE stated he could be reached at WRNG Radio station from 3-6PM, 6-7PM at the home pf CHUCK McGIVEIN, telephone 934-8262. He stated his residence address as listed above and it was determined that this address is for Citizens Committee of Inquiry, WDC, when furnished by LANE on WRNG Radio.

When the writer asked PAUL SHIELDS for his name SHIELDS replied that he was just a reported. It appeared as if SHIELDS did not infact want to participate in the matter but was duped into it by LANE.

For information.



On the front page of
newspaper, city and state
Page 11-2
THE
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Geo

3

Date: 5-13-77
Edition: Morning
Author: Ashkinaze
Editor: Hal Gulliver
Title: MARK LANE

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: ATLANTA

Being Investigated

44-2386-410
210
44-2386-
FILED

point. "The concentration of effort against King was greater than any other single investigation that I saw take place at the Bureau and I saw a lot of them in 30 years. There was a crew of people who did almost nothing for... seven or eight years, except investigate King and try to destroy him... They were going to get King in one way or another.

Lane charges that the removal of Detective Ed Redditt, who had been assigned to provide security for the civil rights leader during his fatal trip to Memphis on orders from "Washington," the commitment of an important witness to a Tennessee mental institution, and the deployment of "Destroy King" squad members in the ensuing murder investigation, were other elements of that vendetta.

Lane, who now directs the Washington-based Citizens Committee of Inquiry, an organization committed to urging Congress to investigate the murders of both King and Kennedy, does not know if the full extent of the FBI involvement in those events will ever be known. But Lane, who said he has personally received 254 threats against his own life since he began his independent investigation into Kennedy's assassination 14 years ago, says that he does have faith in the Senate Select Committee, which is now conducting its own investigation.

"There will be a moment of truth," he declares, "when they ask the FBI and the CIA to make certain documents available to them, and are refused."

Lane, a former New York State legislator who also founded the Wounded Knee Legal Defense Committee, says however that he has already embarked on his next project. It will be an investigation of "monumental importance," he says, delving into the backgrounds of Americans who provided Fidel Castro with the weapons used in the Cuban revolution.

5/16/77

AIRTEL

TO: Director, FBI (44-38861)

FROM: SAC, Atlanta (44-2386)

MURKIN

Enclosed is a copy of a self-explanatory memorandum submitted to SAC, Atlanta by SC KELLEY, who was handling complaints in the Atlanta Division on 5/12/77. Also enclosed is a copy of a newspaper article regarding MARK LANE and his current book. Extensive background data regarding LANE is available to the Bureau.

LANE was in Atlanta in connection with a publicity campaign surrounding his new book, and was interviewed on the afternoon of 5/12/77, on a local radio station. Interview of LANE by local television newsmen as mentioned in paragraph 1, page 1, of the enclosed memo, took place in public space outside the reception room of the Atlanta Office.

Based on LANE's background and his obvious desire to obtain publicity for his latest book, UACB, no reply to questions raised by him, as set forth on page 2 of attached memo, is being sent by SAC to LANE.

For the additional information of the Bureau, I received a telephone call on 5/13/77, from a member of the news media in Memphis, Tennessee, who advised he had interviewed LANE on that date in Memphis. LANE mentioned to this individual a "complaint" he had filed with the Atlanta Office of the FBI and also made a statement to this individual that the FBI was involved in the death of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. I acknowledged that LANE had visited the Atlanta Office seeking certain information and I described his charge against the Bureau's involvement in KING's death as ridiculous.

2 - Bureau (Enc. 2)
1 - Atlanta
JJD:lck
(3)

ASAC
Asper
Berry
44-2386-2492

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF PRISONS
SOUTHEAST REGION
3500 GREENBRIAR PARKWAY, S. W.
BUILDING 300
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30331

June 30, 1977

Federal Bureau of Investigation
P. O. Box 1683
Atlanta, Georgia 30301

ATTENTION: Charles Haynes

RE: ~~WATSON, Robert Byron~~
Reg. No. 19210-101

44-2386-2276

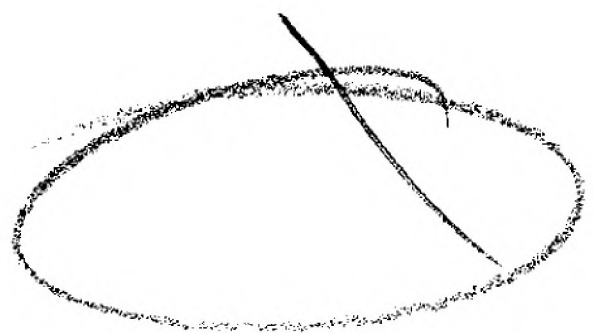
Dear Mr. Haynes:

We were advised by the local FBI office to forward a copy of this letter
to you based on certain comments about James Earl Ray.

Sincerely,

Ernest J. Moore
Ernest J. Moore
Acting Regional Director

Attachment



44-2386-2493

Haynes
#8 *Peru*

DIR.
SERO

JUN 23 2 11 PM '77

764 Wildwood Rd., N. E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30324

June 15, 1977

Mr. Norman A. Carlson
Bureau of Prisons
320 First Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20534

Re: Robert Byron Watson, 19210-101

Dear Mr. Carlson:

My son has been in transit for more than a month from the Federal Correctional Institution in Miami, Florida. He spent several nights in Ocala, Florida, more than a week and a half at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, and has been in Ashland, Kentucky for nearly a month. I visited with Byron while he was in Atlanta, and found him in poor physical condition having spent so much time in the hole. He has only spent two months out of the hole since last September. I don't know what all this will do to his mental condition since he went forth and offered his services to the DEA Federal Gangsters and worked with them only to be framed himself.

I realize that the majority of people in high places are without feeling and compassion since Byron and I have made known widely as to the assassination conspiracy which he overheard setting James Earl Ray up as a fall guy. I do not know James Earl Ray nor have I ever met him, but I feel personally that he has paid his debt to society as he has been through hell and back while the guilty go free.

I received a letter today from Byron dated June 11 in which he states that he and the other three inmates who are in transit to Memphis are physically ill from being in the "hold over" status so long. Byron's condition is worse than the other inmates since he has been a severe asthmatic all his life. He is not getting the proper diet or exercise he needs. My mother and I are upset over Byron being held in Ashland for so long. I cannot understand why he was taken there in the first place since Memphis is much closer unless the government is trying to completely destroy him.

My mother and I would very much appreciate it if Byron could be transferred on to Memphis.

44-2386-2493
Sincerely yours,

Mrs. R. W. Watson
Mrs. R. W. Watson

Berny

P.S. If the government is without funds to make the transfer, my mother and I will gladly pay for this even though the government has already put me in a poverty situation paying for the defense for my son.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Author Mark Lane Claims FBI Plotted Against King

By CAROLE ASHKINAZE

Why was Martin Luther King Jr.'s police protection removed on the day of his assassination, and by whom?

Why was the same FBI squad which had originally been assigned to discredit King (whom they code-named 'Zorro') later directed to investigate his murder?

In what way has the most reliable witness been prevented, perhaps forever, from testifying in court?

These are some of the questions raised in "Code Name 'Zorro': The Murder of Martin Luther King Jr.," a chilling new book by the author of "Rush to Judgment," which 10 years ago poked holes in the Warren Commission's findings concerning the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

And Mark Lane, who collaborated with black comedian and civil rights worker Dick Gregory in the research and writing of "Code Name 'Zorro,'" said Thursday that their findings have led them to the grim conclusion that the FBI, under J. Edgar Hoover's direction, was deeply involved in a covert campaign to "destroy" King.

For example, Lane said in an interview in Atlanta, "Dr. King was subjected to electronic surveillance every minute of his life, starting in the early 1960s." Basing his allegations on information supplied by former FBI Special Agent Arthur Murtagh, who is widely quoted in the book, and others, Lane gave this account of one such episode:

"A microphone concealed in a hotel where King stayed picked up sounds of a party at which he was present," indicating "sexual activity." The trouble, Lane wrote in a segment dealing with the activities of an alleged "Destroy King" FBI squad, was that "it did not really relate King to the sexual activity and one could barely hear King's voice."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

"Atlanta Constitution"

Page 11B

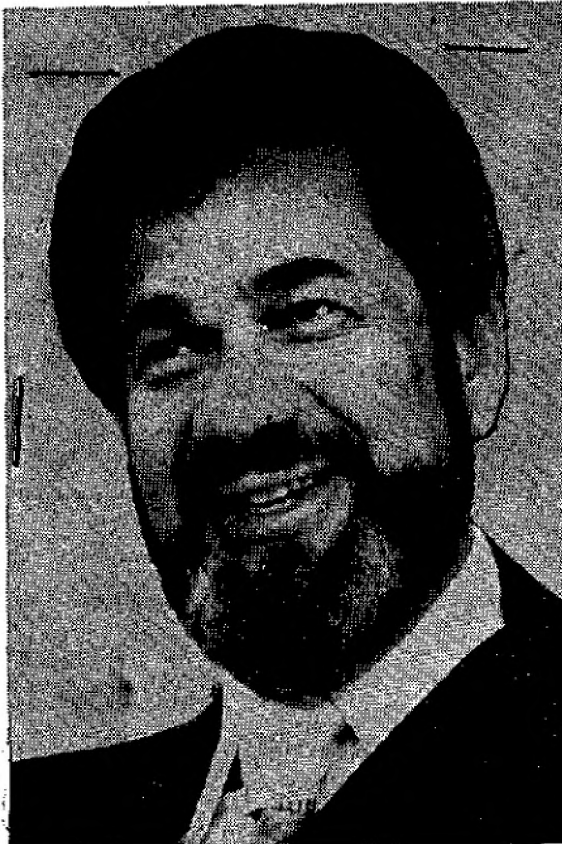
5/13/77

Date:
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Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office
☐ Being Investigated

44-2386-2494

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAY 18 1977	
FBI - ATLANTA	



Staff Photo—George A. Clark

Lane: Still Probing

So Hoover ordered the FBI laboratory to "improve" or doctor the tapes so that King's voice could be clearly heard in a context that would prove embarrassing. He then ordered the tape "sanitized" to remove all fingerprints, had it placed in a package which was also sanitized, together with a threatening, typewritten letter, and directed that it be mailed to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference "from a Southern state," which entailed dispatching an FBI agent to Florida who mailed it, and then flew home.

Hoover's intention, Lane writes, was "to precipitate a separation between Dr. King and his wife in the belief that the separation would reduce

his stature."

Hoover also ordered agents, assigned to investigate King and other civil rights activists, to say that the investigations had been ordered by an assistant attorney general "because Hoover didn't want to be connected with any civil rights investigations," Lane quoted Murtagh. "This was the only time when we told anyone that the Justice Department was ordering us to conduct an investigation," Murtagh said. "In any other kind of case, the Bureau would be glad to take credit."

"It was an organized vendetta," in which the Atlanta, New York and Washington FBI field offices took part, Murtagh told Lane at another

point. "The concentration of effort against King was greater than any other single investigation that I saw take place at the Bureau and I saw a lot of them in 20 years. There was a crew of people who did almost nothing for... seven or eight years, except investigate King and try to destroy him.... They were going to get King in one way or another.

Lane charges that the removal of Detective Ed Redditt, who had been assigned to provide security for the civil rights leader during his fatal trip to Memphis on orders from "Washington," the commitment of an important witness to a Tennessee mental institution, and the deployment of "Destroy King" squad members in the ensuing murder investigation, were other elements of that vendetta.

Lane, who now directs the Washington-based Citizens Committee of Inquiry, an organization committed to urging Congress to investigate the murders of both King and Kennedy, does not know if the full extent of the FBI involvement in those events will ever be known. But Lane, who said he has personally received 254 threats against his own life since he began his independent investigation into Kennedy's assassination 14 years ago, says that he does have faith in the Senate Select Committee, which is now conducting its own investigation.

"There will be a moment of truth," he declares, "when they ask the FBI and the CIA to make certain documents available to them, and are refused."

Lane, a former New York State legislator who also founded the Wounded Knee Legal Defense Committee, says however that he has already embarked on his next project. It will be an investigation of "monumental importance," he says, delving into the backgrounds of Americans who provided Fidel Castro with the weapons used in the Cuban revolution.

3

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : FILE (44-2386)

DATE: 6/24/77

FROM : SAC JAMES J. DUNN, JR.

SUBJECT: MURKIN

On 6/23/77, I received a telephone call from Supervisor JOHN HARDING of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Section, FBIHQ, Ext. 3572. He referred to our airtel and LHM of 9/8/75 (Serials 2332 and 2333 of captioned file.) This LHM incorporates a lengthy Atlanta PD report regarding subject matter. He noted that the KING assassination file is being reviewed at the Bureau in connection with a number of FOIA requests. He asked that Commissioner EAVES, Public Safety Commissioner, City of Atlanta, be contacted as to whether or not the PD report can be released under the FOIA or whether EAVES desired that an exemption be exercised to preclude this report being turned over to FOIA requesters.

On the afternoon of 6/23/77, I was in telephonic contact with Commissioner EAVES, and he indicated that he had no objection to the report being released. He indicated that he assumed that any names in the report would be excised. I suggested that he have someone from his Department review the report to make the decision as to which names should be excised and he indicated he would have JUDY WILLIAMSON contact me and that she would handle the review of the report for the necessary excising. It is to be noted that the report indicated WILLIAMSON had some input into the preparation of same.

I subsequently relayed the above data to Mr. HARDING at FBIHQ and he subsequently called me back and advised that a Research Analyst had reviewed this report at the Bureau and suggested that all names be excised from the report, with the exception of Commissioner EAVES and ROBERT BYRON WATSON. This matter will be pursued with JUDY WILLIAMSON when she contacts me.

JJD:ick
(1)



5010-110

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

44-2386-2915

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 24 1976	
FBI-ATLANTA	

HAYNES

AT 44-2386

ADDENDUM:

On 7/6/77, JUDY WILLIAMSON (telephone number 355-9380) advised that she had been in touch with Commissioner EAVES regarding this matter and he requested that the Police Department report not be released. WILLIAMSON noted that the report contained information received on a confidential basis from prison records and, also, that some of the people interviewed had requested that their identities be maintained in the strictest confidence.

Data received from WILLIAMSON was furnished to Supervisor JOHN HARDING at FBIHQ on 7/6/77.

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☒ Airtel

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ E F T O
☐ CLEAR

Date 9/21/77

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
 ATTN: CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY UNIT
 SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION

FROM: SAC, ATLANTA (66-2242) (RUC)

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE
 ON ASSASSINATIONS
 BUDED 9/23/77

Re FBIHQ teletype to Atlanta, Birmingham, Chicago,
 Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, and St. Louis, 8/18/77.

Atlanta is furnishing FBIHQ, under separate cover,
 two xerox copies each of 3250 Atlanta documents relative
 to captioned matter.

Referenced Bureau teletype pointed out that the
 House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) which is
 investigating the assassinations of JOHN F. KENNEDY and
 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., had requested access to investigative
 files of recipient field offices concerning the Bureau's
 investigation of the assassination of KING (code name MURKIN).

FBIHQ instructed that recipient offices using
 the criteria set forth on page 2 of referenced teletype,
 furnish FBIHQ with two xerox copies of the MURKIN investigative
 file.

Based on the above, Atlanta noted that it had
 a main 44 file on MURKIN, namely 44-2386, consisting of
 23 volumes (2495 serials), plus subfiles B (1 volume -
 bulky exhibits), C (1 volume - xerox copies of Atlanta transmittal
 letters to the Lab), D (1 volume - xerox copies of Lab reports),
 E (1 volume - press release file), SF-1 (1 volume - MURKIN
 cost data information) and SF-2 (1 volume - newspaper clippings).

2 - Bureau
 1 - Package (Enc. 3250) (4 boxes)
 3 - Atlanta (66-2242)
 1 - 44-2386 (MURKIN)
 1 - 157-3094 (ASSASSINATION OF MLK)

EAS/bw
 (9)

44-2386-2496

Approved: [Signature] Transmitted _____ (Number) _____ (Time) Per _____

AT 66-2242

In addition, Atlanta had a racial matter case on the assassination of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., Atlanta file 157-3094 which consisted of 3 volumes (266) serials and appears to have been a repository of information regarding KING's assassination, the KING funeral, etc., prior to the opening of the Atlanta 44 file on MURKIN.

Atlanta has reviewed all the above files and volumes and two xerox copies of each serial in these files are being sent to FBIHQ as requested by the Bureau:

Atlanta file 44-2386 on MURKIN consisting of 23 volumes and 7 subfiles:

VOLUME 1

Serials 44-2386 - 1B-1 through 6
1 through 47
47 (two different serials were
marked 47)
48 through 125

VOLUME 2

Serials 44-2386-126 through 300

VOLUME 3

Serials 44-2386-301 through 500

VOLUME 4

Serials 44-2386-501 through 700

VOLUME 5

serials 44-2386 - 701 through 800

VOLUME 6

Serials 44-2386 - 801 and 802

AT 66-2242

VOLUME 7

Serials 44-2386 - 803 through 827
there was no serial 828
as this was skipped.
- 829 through 898
- 899 and 900 are the same
serial - a wanted flyer for
JAMES EARL RAY
- 901 through 1000

VOLUME 8

Serials 44-2386 - 1001 through 1058
there was no serial 1059 but there
were two serials marked 1059A and 1059B
- 1060 through 1200

VOLUME 9

Serials 44-2386 - 1201 through 1262
there was no serial 1263 as this
number was skipped
- 1264 through 1400

VOLUME 10

Serials 44-2386 - 1401 through 1600

VOLUME 11

Serials 44-2386 - 1601 through 1730
- 1730 - there were two different
serials marked as serial 1730
- 1731 through 1800

VOLUME 12

Serials 44-2386 - 1801 through 1863
- 1863 - there were 2 different serials
both marked as serial 1863
- 1864 through 1875A

VOLUME 13

Serials 44-2386 - 1876 (large report - only 1 serial
in this volume)

AT 66-2242

VOLUME 14

- Serials 44-2386 - 1877 through 1901
- 1901 - there were 2 different serials
both marked as 1901
 - 1902 through 1926
there was no serial 1927 as this
was skipped
 - 1928 through 1939

VOLUME 15

- Serials 44-2386 - 1940 through 1954
- there was no serial 1955 as this
number was skipped
 - 1956 through 1999

VOLUME 16

- Serials 44-2386 - 2000 through 2025A
- there was no serial 2025 as this number
was skipped but there was a serial 2026A
 - 2027, 2027A, 2028 and 2028A
there was no serial 2029 as this
number was skipped but there was
a serial 2029A
 - 2030, 2030A
there was no serial 2031 as this
number was skipped, but there was
a serial 2031A
there was no serial 2032 as this
number was skipped, but there was
a serial 2032A
 - 2033 through 2051
there was no serial 2052 as this
number was skipped
 - 2053 through 2080

VOLUME 17

- Serials 44-2386 - 2081 through 2113

VOLUME 18

- Serials 44-2386 - 2113A through 2185

AT 66-2242

VOLUME 19

Serials 44-2386 - 2186 through 2291

VOLUME 20

Serials 44-2386 - 2292 through 2335

VOLUME 21

Serials 44-2386 - 2336 through 2351
- 2351 - there were 2 different serials
that were both marked 2351
- 2352 through 2395

VOLUME 22

Serials 44-2386 - 2394 this serial was mistakenly marked
2394 and was different from
serial 2394 in volume 21
- 2395 this serial was another copy
of serial 2395 that was in volume 21
- 2396 through 2412

VOLUME 23

Serials 44-2386 - 2413 through 2487
one serial which was not serialized
- 2488
one serial which was not serialized
- 2489, 2490
- 2491 - there were 2 different serials
marked as serial 2491, both being
sent to FBIHQ with serial 2492
- 2492 through 2495
- form FD-479

VOLUME B (Bulky Exhibits)

Serials 44-2386 - 1B - 1 through 6

VOLUME C (Xerox copies of Atlanta transmitted letters
to the FBI Lab, Identification Division, Etc.)

Serials 44-2386 - C - there were 21 items not serialized
to this volume

AT 66-2242

VOLUME D (xerox copies of FBIHQ Lab letters)

Serials 44-2386-D - there were 69 items not serialized to this volume

VOLUME E (Press Release File)

Serials 44-2386-E - there were 17 items not serialized to this volume.

VOLUME SF-1 (MURKIN Cost Data File)

Serials 44-2386 - SF-1 - 1 through 7

VOLUME SF-2 (MURKIN Newspaper Clipping File)

Serials 44-2386 - SF-2 - 1 through 36

1A EXHIBITS - VOLUMES 1 - 4

Items 44-2386 - 1A - 1 through 64

- 65 this was an NCIC list of motor vehicles and license plates stolen in Georgia - it was too big to xerox
- 66 through 78
- 79 photograph not in the 1A envelope
- 80
- 81 photograph not in 1A envelope
- 82 through 119
- 120 polygraph chart- too large to xerox
- 121 through 124

BULKY EXHIBITS FOR 44-2386

Item 44-2386 - 1B - 1 this was a Delta Air Lines computer printout of passengers aboard various Delta Air Line flights, including DAL flight 932 from Memphis to Chicago, 4/27/68 and DAL flight 595 from Birmingham to Memphis, 4/27/68. This was a voluminous, continuous run computer printout that was too large to xerox.

Item 44-2386 - 1B - 2 these were items of physical evidence, including bed linen, cigarette butts, maps, a saw, newspapers, etc, and are not being xeroxed.

Item 44-2386 - 1B - 3 this was a xerox copy of the complete service record of AARON ISAAC LOFTON - these items contain a notation "Information copy (extract) only, to

actually sent to Bureau 4/15/68

AT 66-2242

be destroyed upon completion of action. Record copy on file at USAIRR."

As a result, this item cannot be duplicated for another agency.

Xeroxed copies are being sent to FBIHQ.

Item 44-2386 - 1B - 4, these are enlarged copies of an Atlanta area map and a Los Angeles area map and are too large to run off on the xerox machine. As a result they are not being submitted to FBIHQ.

Item 44-2386 - 1B - 5 these were items furnished by the Newark Office to Atlanta which included a large looseleaf type book with instructions on locksmithing and a locksmith kit. These items are not being xeroxed.

Item 44-2386 - 1B - 6 this is a copy of a looseleaf ledger book of JIMMY D. GARNER, 107 14th Street, NE, Atlanta, Georgia. Xerox copies of this are being sent to FBIHQ.

Atlanta file 157-3094 (Assassination of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR - Racial Matter)

VOLUME 1

Serials 157-3094 - 1 through 100

VOLUME 2

Serials 157-3094 -101 through 205
-205 there were 2 different serials,
both marked as 205
-206 through 213
-213 there were 2 different serials,
both marked as 213
-214 through 218

VOLUME 3

Serials 157-3094 - 219 through 266
one serial that was not serialized
which should have been 267

AT 66-2242

1A EXHIBITS FOR 157-3094

Items 157-3094 - 1A - 1,2,3

SAC, ATLANTA (44-2386)

10/11/77

SA WILLIAM D. COCHRAN

MURKIN

MASON EVANS, 2574 River Glen Circle, Atlanta, Georgia, 30338, telephone number 458-3621, on 10/7/77, advised that on the day MARTIN LUTHER KING was killed in Memphis, Tennessee, he was at the Coach and Six Restaurant located in the 1776 Building on Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia. He stated that he was having lunch with HENRY HAY and BILL GORDAN of the Cadillac Division of General Motors. He stated that they were sitting at the bar when the bartender whom he described as a white male, approximately 38 to 40 years of age, 6'2", 200 to 212 pounds, blond hair, came over to where they were sitting at the bar and casually mentioned that if KING goes to Memphis he will be killed. EVANS stated that he did not think too much of the remark and did not pay too much attention to it until later in the day he heard later that evening over the radio that KING had been killed in Memphis.

EVANS stated he still did not place too much emphasis on this matter until he read in the papers several weeks ago that one JACK PEETEE was arrested by Secret Service and charged with threatening the President of the United States. He stated that he understands a number of weapons were recovered from PEETEE by Secret Service. MASON EVANS stated that he is aware that one JACK PEETEE was a building manager at the 1776 Building and possibly was acquainted with the bartender at the Coach and Six Restaurant. EVANS stated that for this reason he thought he better report the matter and there may be a connection between PEETEE and the bartender. He stated he knows of no actual relationship between the two but since they work in the same building he thought that they might be acquainted. He stated that BILL GORDAN is now with the Cadillac Division of General Motors in Chicago, Illinois, and HENRY C. HAY has retired from General Motors and is now living in the Sandy Springs, Georgia, area.

2 Atlanta
WDC:psm

(2)

SM

44-2386-2427

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FBI-ATLANTA	

[Signature]

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, ATLANTA (44-2386)

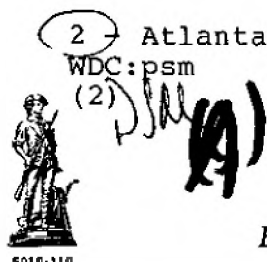
DATE: 10/11/77

FROM : SA WILLIAM D. COCHRAN

SUBJECT: MURKIN

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800 AT
10/12/77

44-2386-2477

SEARCHED
SERIALIZED
INDEXED
FILED

FBI - ATLANTA

Hayman

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Atlanta, Georgia

October 14, 1977

MURKIN

On October 7, 1977, Mason Evans, 2574 River Glen Circle, Atlanta, Georgia, telephone number 458-3621, telephonically contacted the Atlanta Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), on October 7, 1977, and advised that on the day that Martin Luther King was killed in Memphis, Tennessee, he was at the Coach and Six Restaurant located next door to the 1776 Peachtree Street Building Atlanta, Georgia. He was having lunch with Henry Hay and Bill Gordan of the Cadillac Division of General Motors. Evans was sitting at the bar when he overheard the bartender described as a white male, approximately 38 to 40 years old, 6'2", 200 pounds, blond hair, who stated that if Martin Luther King goes to Memphis he will be killed. Evans stated that he did not think too much of this remark and did not pay much attention until later that day he heard that Martin Luther King had been killed in Memphis.

Evans stated that he still did not place too much emphasis on this matter until he read in the newspaper several weeks ago that a Jack Peetee was arrested by the United States Secret Service and charged with threatening the President of the United States. Evans understood that a number of weapons were recovered from Peetee's residence by the United States Secret Service. Evans stated that he believed a Jack Peetee was the building manager of the 1776 Peachtree Street Building and possibly could be acquainted with the bartender at the Coach and Six Restaurant which is next door. Evans was unable to substantiate why he felt that the manager Peetee of the 1776 Peachtree Building might be associated with the bartender from the Coach and Six Restaurant.

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.

4 - Bureau 2 - Memphis (2) - Atlanta JJH:psm (8)

SSM

B

44-2386-2498

