

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/12/68

Mr. EDWIN BODENHEIMER, 180 Clark Place, Memphis, Tennessee, telephone number 275-9844, who stated that he operates Shelby Amusement Company, 975 James, Memphis, Tennessee, was interviewed at Canipe Amusement Company, 424 South Main Street by Lieutenant J. D. HAMBY, Homicide Bureau, Memphis Police Department, and SA FRANKLIN L. JOHNSON. He furnished the following information:

On April 4, 1968, he spent a good part of the day with Mr. G. W. CANIPE, a competitor and personal friend, and he (Mr. BODENHEIMER) was not at the Canipe Amusement Company at any time on the afternoon or evening of April 4, 1968.

He stated that as an aid in helping Mr. CANIPE to estimate what time Mr. CANIPE returned to Canipe Amusement Company on the afternoon of April 4, 1968, he recalled that it was 5:20 p.m. when Mr. CANIPE telephoned Mr. BODENHEIMER, and he would estimate that Mr. CANIPE could have only been at CANIPE's place of business a few minutes at this time. Mr. BODENHEIMER stated he could furnish no information which would be of assistance in the investigation of the shooting of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING.

78

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987  
by SA FRANKLIN L. JOHNSON:wp Date dictated 4/11/68

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

ME 44-1987

NO. 2 ENGINE HOUSE,  
MEMPHIS FIRE DEPARTMENT,  
474 SOUTH MAIN STREET,  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

(This section pertains to interviews with firemen stationed at this house and with police officers and sheriff's deputies who were on duty at or near this fire house as a result of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., being at the Lorraine Motel located in the immediate vicinity of this engine house.)

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/16/68

1

Lt. JUDSON EUGENE GHORMLEY, Deputy Sheriff, Shelby County Sheriff's Office, a white male, age 40, residing at 4124 Ronnie Avenue, telephone 386-6034, furnished the following information:

On April 4, 1968, he was assigned to Tactical Unit 10, which consisted of three vehicles and twelve officers, both Deputy Sheriffs and Memphis Police Officers. The Deputy Sheriffs, in addition to GHORMLEY assigned to Tactical Unit 10 were W. J. BERRY, R. N. BAKER, W. A. DU FOUR, V. V. DOLLAHITE, and R. W. MALEY. Memphis Police Officers assigned to Tactical Unit 10 were Officers DOUGLASS, GROSS, DUNN, LANDERS, WRIGHT and MORRIS.

At about 6:00 PM on April 4, 1968, Tactical Unit 10 had stopped at the Memphis Fire Department Engine House located at Main and Butler, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  block southwest of the Lorraine Motel, and the unit was in that location when a Negro male detective ran into the fire station and stated that Doctor KING had been shot. Upon hearing this, the members of Tactical Unit 10, including GHORMLEY ran east on Butler to Mulberry and north on Mulberry toward the Lorraine Motel. While en route, GHORMLEY observed a number of Negro males and females standing on the balcony of the motel pointing towards a building west of the motel, the front of which was located on S. Main Street.

GHORMLEY saw Officer DU FOUR running up the stairs of the Lorraine Motel toward the balcony where Doctor KING's body was lying. DU FOUR was followed closely by Officer BAKER. DU FOUR and BAKER, in that order, would have been the first officers to reach KING.

GHORMLEY also saw Officer LANDERS scale a wall on the west side of Mulberry Street and enter a back yard, which he later determined to have been behind the buildings known as 418, 422 $\frac{1}{2}$  and 424 S. Main Street.

80

On 4/16/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987  
by SA THOMAS L. BUCKLEY /bbs Date dictated 4/16/68

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

Seeing the people on the balcony pointing toward the building on Main Street, Officer GHORMLEY stopped and retraced his steps around the fire station and ran north on Main Street. As he approached the building at 424 S. Main, he noticed a suitcase, blue in color, a rifle box, which was partly open and what appeared to be a blanket lying in the doorway at 424 S. Main. He could see the barrel of a rifle in the rifle box. At this time, a white male whose name he later determined was Mr. CANIPE, came to the door of 424 S. Main and advised him that a white male, who CANIPE described as tall, a little on the heavy side, wearing a dark colored possibly black suit, a shirt and tie, having dark colored hair possibly black, moments before had deposited these articles in the doorway and had then run south on Main Street.

Using his walkie-talkie radio, GHORMLEY advised his dispatcher of the information provided by Mr. CANIPE. He also guarded the articles lying in the doorway so no one would disturb them. Upon talking further to Mr. CANIPE, he learned from CANIPE that shortly after the white male who left the above described articles in CANIPE's doorway, had run south on Main Street, that CANIPE had noticed a white Mustang automobile drive past that location at a high rate of speed headed north on Main. At this time, Officer GHORMLEY again used his radio to advise his dispatcher of this information.

The next officer to arrive at GHORMLEY's location was Officer DOUGLASS, who drove the station wagon assigned to Tactical Unit 10 from its location at the fire station to a location directly in front of 424 S. Main where Officer DOUGLASS double parked the station wagon and aided in guarding the evidence left by the above described white male.

The next officer at this location was Deputy Sheriff V. V. DOLLAHITE, who approached the location from the north on Main Street after having apparently circled the block. About this time, Officers from the Memphis Homicide Squad arrived at the scene and took charge. GHORMLEY estimated the total time lapsed from the time he heard that

ME 44-1987

3

KING had been shot until he discovered the suitcase, gun and blanket, was no more than 2 or 3 minutes. GHORMLEY does not recall seeing a white Mustang parked along the area of S. Main, which he covered during the time immediately following the shooting, neither does he recall seeing anyone running south on Main Street in this same area.

During the incident described above, GHORMLEY was dressed in a khaki colored long sleeve shirt bearing the insignia of the Shelby County Sheriff's Department, and dark green uniform trousers. He was not wearing a hat or helmet. GHORMLEY recalls that Officer LANDERS, whom he saw scaling the wall across from the Lorraine Motel, was dressed in the usual Memphis Police Department uniform consisting of a blue shirt and trousers. Officer LANDERS was not wearing a hat or helmet. GHORMLEY recalls that there were 2 Negro males in Canipe's Amusement Center at the time he was talking to CANIPE. He thinks these person may also have seen the above described white male deposit the gun, suitcase, and blanket in CANIPE's doorway and may also have seen the white Mustang speeding north on S. Main Street in front of CANIPE's store. He does not know the names of these Negroes.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 4/13/68

Patrolman VERNON VERNARD DOLLAHITE, Patrol Division, Shelby County Sheriff's Office, residence 3330 Dawn Drive, Apartment 12, home telephone 358-8067, Memphis, Tennessee, was interviewed by Lieutenant W. S. SCHULTZ, Homicide Bureau, Memphis Police Department, and SA FRANKLIN L. JOHNSON, at which time he re-enacted his movements on the afternoon of April 4, 1968, after he learned that Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot at the Lorraine Motel. He furnished the following information:

On Thursday, April 4, 1968, he was assigned to Tactical Unit No. 10, consisting of 12 men, half of whom were Deputy Sheriffs and half of whom were police officers, which unit was located at the fire station at Main and Butler around 6:00 p.m., when he learned that Dr. KING had been shot.

Around 6:00 p.m., he and other officers were inside the fire station when he heard someone yell that Dr. KING had been shot. He immediately ran out of the door on the north side of the fire station, then ran east toward the Lorraine Motel, jumping over a fence, and then dropping down about a 10-foot concrete retaining wall which runs along the west side of Mulberry Street. He then ran to the driveway on Mulberry Street, which leads into the Lorraine Motel, to a point beneath the balcony where Dr. KING's body was lying. He stated that he heard an unknown Negro male at the scene say, "The dirty n----- f----- police shot him."

As he ran into the driveway, he dropped his firearm and had to stop momentarily and pick up the firearm, checking it briefly, and then continuing. After going to the scene near where the body was lying and determining that other officers were converging on the area, he immediately ran out of the driveway, running north on Mulberry Street to Huling and west on Huling Street to Main Street, then south on Main Street. As he

83

On 4/11/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA FRANKLIN L. JOHNSON:wp Date dictated 4/12/68

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

ran out of the driveway at the Lorraine Motel, he was joined by an officer named MALEY, who ran along with him to a driveway on the south side of Huling Street between Mulberry and South Main Street. Officer MALEY stopped at that point to observe, and DOLLAHITE kept running toward Main.

Upon reaching Main Street and turning south on Main Street, he saw no pedestrian traffic whatever. He continued running south on Main Street until he came to Jim's Grill, a restaurant at 418 South Main Street. The door was standing open. He stepped inside, looked around briefly, seeing customers sitting around eating and drinking, and he announced to all present that no one should leave that restaurant until the police had arrived and approved their leaving the premises. He then pulled the door to the restaurant shut and continued running south on Main Street.

As he came out of Jim's Grill and started running south again, he observed some items lying in the doorway to Canipe Amusement Company at 424 South Main. At the time, he had no idea as to the significance of these items lying in that doorway. He did not stop but kept running south on Main past Canipe's, going a distance of some 20 to 30 feet before stopping. His purpose in running past Canipe's was in order to look east around the corner of the building in which Canipe's is located to see if he could observe anyone running or any other suspicious activity, DOLLAHITE stating that at this time he, of course, did not know the point from which the gun had been fired resulting in the killing of Dr. KING.

Upon running 20 or 30 feet south of Canipe's, he observed that there was no area at that location where anyone could run or conceal himself, there being some large outdoor signs and a fence located just south of Canipe's. In addition, he observed other officers running north on Main on the east side of the sidewalk, coming from the direction of the fire station, so that these officers would have been in a position to see anyone running or any other suspicious activity in the general area in which DOLLAHITE was proceeding. He then turned around and walked north on the east side of Main to the

vicinity of the doorway to Canipe Amusement Company. About this time other officers arrived on the scene and took up a position around the items lying in front of the doorway to Canipe Amusement Company. Patrolman DOLLAHITE then walked west across Main Street in front of Canipe Amusement Company and stationed himself near a blue Camaro parked on the west side of Main opposite Canipe Amusement Company.

Patrolman DOLLAHITE advised that he is positive that after he arrived on Main Street, and until the officers had given their approval, no person left the area on foot. He is equally positive that no vehicle sped away from the area around Canipe Amusement Company after he arrived on Main Street. He stated that the only time he was not in a position to observe the activity in the 400 block of South Main after he first arrived there was during the time that he stepped into Jim's Grill. He stated, however, that he was in this grill only momentarily and he is certain in his own mind that he was not in Jim's Grill long enough for anyone to have run from either of the exits to a rooming house at 422 $\frac{1}{2}$  South Main and thereafter run to an automobile and leave the scene without his having seen such activity.

With regard to the owner of Canipe Amusement Company, a white man, and two customers inside Canipe Amusement Company, two Negro males, he stated that he saw all three of these persons and was with a group of officers who were talking to these individuals. He stated, however, that as he ran south on Main before leaving Canipe Amusement Company, he did not see the white male, Mr. CANIPE, step out onto the sidewalk. He stated that since he was alone and one of the first officers to arrive in this area, his essential purpose was first to attempt to observe and locate any suspicious person who might be attempting to leave the area, and secondly, wherever he saw any people in business houses or otherwise, he instructed them to remain where they were so that officers later checking the area would have an opportunity to interview everyone who was in the area as soon as possible.

Patrolman DOLLAHITE advised that after other officers had arrived in front of Canipe Amusement Company, and after he had learned during the conversation that



one or more of the three persons inside Canipe Amusement Company reported hearing the "squealing" of tires as a white Mustang sped away from the area, he observed what he regarded to be skid marks at a point approximately one car length south of the doorway to Canipe Amusement Company. In pointing out the general area where he observed these skid marks, Patrolman DOLLAHITE observed that there is space for three automobiles to park between the first driveway south of Canipe Amusement Company (on the east side of Main) and a no parking zone around a fire plug just to the north of this driveway. He stated that he would estimate that the skid marks which he observed were made by an automobile parked in the center parking area, assuming all three parking spaces were filled at the time.

As to automobiles parked on the east side of Main in the area in front of Canipe Amusement Company at the time he arrived on the scene, he stated he cannot now recall a description of the vehicles which he did see. However, he does recall observing about a 1962 red Chevrolet station wagon which he believes was parked in the first space south of the above-mentioned driveway. He advised that he was also under the impression he had seen this station wagon at another point just north of this driveway and possibly the owner had moved the car later on during the evening. He stated that there was an automobile parked directly in front of Canipe Amusement Company, but no automobile parked in the space immediately behind the car in front of Canipe Amusement Company. It was in this blank space, or the number two position south of Canipe Amusement Company, that he saw what he thought to be skid marks and which appeared to have been made as a car pulled away from that position going north on Main Street.

Patrolman DOLLAHITE advised that he had his firearm in his hand at all times when he was in the 400 block of Main Street, and if the witnesses in Canipe Amusement Company reported seeing a Deputy running south on Main carrying a firearm, then undoubtedly these witnesses were referring to him, Patrolman DOLLAHITE.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/15/68

1

TORRENCE N. LANDERS, Patrolman, Memphis Police Department, furnished the following information:

On the afternoon of April 4, 1968, he was a member of Mobile Tactical Unit Ten which consisted of 3 vehicles. Shortly prior to 6:00 PM, the unit stopped at the fire station located in the 400 block of S. Main Street at E. Butler Avenue. Doctor MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., was staying at the Lorraine Motel at the time, and the motel was located approximately one block from the fire station. At approximately 5:50 PM on April 4, he heard a sharp sound which resembled a firearm being discharged, however, no one else paid any attention to the noise and he paid no further attention to it, however, a few moments later someone in the fire station announced that Doctor KING had been shot. He immediately left the fire station by the door on the northwest corner, ran along side the station to a retaining wall in back of the station which is also Mulberry Avenue. He and another officer jumped down onto Mulberry Street and ran to the Lorraine Motel where a group of Negroes were gathered on the walk beneath the balcony. There was a great deal of turmoil, and he asked one of the men present, from what direction the shot was fired. This individual pointed to the second floor windows of a rooming house on S. Main Street and said, "from over there."

Officer FLANDERS immediately left the motel on foot, ran across Mulberry Street, and leaping on an empty 55 gallon drum which was on the sidewalk, he boosted himself up onto the top of a retaining wall. He then searched the ground in back of the rooming house for footprints, however, he found none with the exception of 2 footprints near a cellar door. It had rained the previous day and the ground was soft and any footprints would have been easily noted. Just a few minutes later, he was joined in the search by a deputy sheriff, who was wearing a light colored helmet. LANDERS stated that he, himself, had no hat and he was wearing a light blue shirt, no tie, and dark blue trousers.

87

On 4/13/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987  
by SA MELVIN E. DE GRAW  
SA KENNETH A. WILLIAMS KAW/bbs Date dictated 4/13/68

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

ME 44-1987

2

The ground level premises in the area were immediately searched, however, nothing was revealed or noted connected to this investigation. He also advised that in a matter of a few minutes the area was swarming with officers who sealed off the area in a effort to apprehend the individual responsible for shooting Doctor KING. He reiterated that he is positive if anyone had been across the street from the Lorraine Motel in the area behind the rooming house in the 400 block of S. Main Street, he would have been able to observe the individual's footprints, however, none were noted.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 16, 1968

CHARLES ELVIN STONE, 584 Orchard Drive, Memphis, Tennessee, was interviewed at the Number Two Engine House, Memphis Fire Department, 474 South Main Street. STONE advised that he is a member of the Memphis Fire Department, and has been in this employment for the past three years. He stated that he was on duty at the Firehouse on April 4, 1968, and was a witness to the shooting of DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING. He stated that at approximately 6:00 p.m. on that date, he was in the rear locker room of the Fire Department, and was looking out the back window across the street to the motel where DR. KING was staying. He advised that DR. KING was standing on the balcony outside of his hotel room, and was talking to another individual below the balcony. STONE stated that there was another man standing to the right of DR. KING, and a number of other individuals located in the courtyard directly below the hotel room of DR. KING.

STONE stated that as KING was talking to the individual below him, a shot rang out, and DR. KING fell over backwards. STONE stated that he was stunned for a few seconds, and after realizing what had happened, ran inside to the center of the firehouse, and told both the other firemen and the police officers that were in the firehouse at that time that DR. KING had been shot. At first the officers thought that STONE was joking, but one of the other firemen came rushing in saying the same thing. At that instance, all of the police officers rushed out of the firehouse in an attempt to cut off the area in which the shooting occurred. STONE stated that at approximately ten seconds later, he went out the side door of the Fire Department, and proceeded towards Mulberry Street, the street on which DR. KING's motel was located. STONE stated there was mass confusion at the hotel as people were running to see what had happened, and the only ones he saw on the street at that time were the police officers who were converging on the area. STONE stated that he did not notice any white man in the area immediately after the shooting nor did he notice any individual wearing a white hood. STONE stated that after a few minutes, he walked to the front of the Firehouse, but stated that he did not observe any white Mustang on Front Street or in that vicinity.

89

On 4/16/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
by SAs EDWARD M. QUINN  
SHIELDS W. SMITH / EMQ:jms Date dictated 4/16/68

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

ME 44-1987

2

STONE also advised that he did not notice a Mustang of that type near the Firehouse at any time during that day.

STONE stated that with him in the locker room at the time of the shooting were Lieutenant LOENNEKE and Fireman KING, both members of the Fire Department, and a Negro police officer, Officer RICHMOND. STONE stated that all of these individuals were watching the hotel room at the time DR. KING was shot, and all saw the actual shooting. STONE stated that from the sound of the shot, he thought it came from the parking lot located north of the Fire Department, but that it could have been slightly further north.

STONE advised that he was unable to furnish any positive information concerning the individual who fired the shot killing DR. KING.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 15, 1968

Mr. GEORGE W. LOENNEKE, 1390 Smythe, Memphis, Tennessee, was interviewed at the Memphis Police Department, and furnished the following information:

LOENNEKE stated that he is a Lieutenant at the Memphis Fire Department, and is regularly assigned to Fire Station Number 2, located at 474 South Main Street. He advised that he was on duty at this location on April 4, 1968. LOENNEKE stated that at approximately 6:00 p.m. on that date he was standing, looking through a peephole in a newspaper, which had been placed over the window on the rear door of the fire station. He stated that he was in the locker room at the rear of the station, and with him was a Negro police officer, Officer RICHMOND, and another fireman named WILLIAM KING.

LOENNEKE went on to state that as he approached his locker, which was to the right of the window, Officer RICHMOND called him and said, "DR. KING is fixing to leave his hotel room." LOENNEKE stated that he then asked Officer RICHMOND to let him look at KING, as LOENNEKE had not seen DR. KING for approximately two years. While LOENNEKE was looking through the peephole of the window, he saw DR. KING standing and leaning against the rail, looking down to the parking lot, saying something to another Negro male. Individuals by the name of BABY JESUS and Reverend BEVEL were standing to the extreme right of DR. KING. LOENNEKE stated that as DR. KING turned slowly to his left to say something to the individual below was when the shot was fired. LOENNEKE advised that it appeared to him as though DR. KING was looking at something or someone that fired the shot. LOENNEKE immediately turned to Police Officer RICHMOND, and stated, "DR. KING has been shot." He stated that Officer RICHMOND went in a state of shock at the sound of this news, and did not take any immediate action.

LOENNEKE stated that he then ran through the apparatus floor, telling other police officers that DR. KING had been shot. He then went through the lunchroom of the engine house telling

91

On 4/13/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
by SAs EDWARD M. QUINN  
SHIELDS W. SMITH / EMQ:jms Date dictated 4/13/68

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

the officers in that location that DR. KING had been shot. All police officers, upon hearing the news that DR. KING had been shot, immediately rushed out the door and proceeded in all directions in order to surround the motel in which DR. KING was staying.

LOENNEKE further advised that after he informed the police officers that DR. KING had been shot, he went out the front door of the station onto Main Street, but did not observe anyone running on Main Street or any pedestrian traffic whatsoever. In addition, he stated that he did not see a white Mustang on Main Street after the shooting nor did he hear the sound of an automobile leaving in a hurried manner.

LOENNEKE stated that while he was looking through the peephole, both before and immediately after DR. KING had been shot, he did not see any person on Mulberry Street wearing a light jacket or pull-over shirt with a hood on it. He stated that just prior to the time DR. KING was shot, two Negro females were standing on the second floor balcony, a short distance from DR. KING. LOENNEKE advised that at the time DR. KING was shot, these women started hollering in excitement, and appeared to be in a state of shock. He stated that both women, after realizing what had happened, then began to attempt to administer help to DR. KING. He also advised that there was a white man, without a suitcoat and wearing black horn-rimmed glasses, who approached the body of DR. KING, and then left to obtain more towels, which were being used to stop the blood coming from DR. KING's body. LOENNEKE stated that he had seen this white man previously that date with DR. KING, and assumed that he was in DR. KING's party. Approximately thirty seconds after the shot had been fired, a Negro male appeared on the balcony, and started taking photographs of DR. KING's body. LOENNEKE thought this odd at the time because the individual made no attempt to assist DR. KING, but was more concerned with the taking of the pictures.

LOENNEKE further stated that at the time the shot was fired, he saw only one man in the courtyard or parking lot beneath DR. KING's balcony, and this man he assumed was DR. KING's personal chauffeur.

LOENNEKE advised that to the best of his knowledge, the shot that was fired came from the left of the firehouse and from a position which could not be seen from the window from which

ME 44-1987

3

he was observing DR. KING. He stated that at no time did he see a white male running from the area, and could furnish no positive information concerning a possible suspect in this murder.

LOENNEKE advised that he was unable to furnish any additional information at this time.



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/15/68

1

Patrolman BARNEY G. WRIGHT, Memphis Police Department, home address 4264 Dunn Street, Memphis, Tennessee, advised as follows:

On April 4, 1968, he was assigned to a Tact Unit which is an emergency unit. That unit consists of 3 automobiles with four police officers in each automobile. The automobiles consisted of both Memphis Police Officers and Shelby County Sheriff's Office Deputies. During the day of April 4, 1968, the members of that emergency squad did change cars from time to time so that at different times during the day he, himself, was riding with different police officers. They were doing this so that the members of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office did not feel that the Memphis Police Department did not want to work with them. Shortly before 6:00 PM, April 4, 1968, the 3 cars making up the emergency squad or Tact Unit parked in the driveway of the fire station at Main and E. Butler Streets. That fire station is located south of the rooming house from which the shot which killed Doctor MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., was believed to be fired. A fenced in parking lot is located between the fire station and that building. The 3 vehicles making up the emergency squad were parked facing Main Street. Two of the vehicles were side by side, and the third vehicle was directly behind one of the 2 cars which faced onto Main Street.

He was sitting in the lounge of the fire station at Main and E. Butler Streets shortly before 6:00 PM reading a newspaper when he heard rattling of the plate glass window behind him. The lounge area of that fire station is on the south side of the building. He does not recall hearing any shot but only the rattling of the plate glass window, and immediately thereafter the other members in his emergency squad began running out of the north side of the fire station building. He ran out after them and on the outside of the building he was surprised to find that the other members of his emergency squad were running toward Mulberry Street and the Lorraine Motel instead of

94

On 4/13/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987  
 by SA VINCENT H. LAMMERS  
SA JOE W. PHILLIPS JWP/bbs Date dictated 4/13/68

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

toward their emergency vehicles. He ran to Mulberry Street, but did not cross Mulberry Street as there is a high retaining wall at Mulberry Street. As he arrived at Mulberry Street, other members of his emergency squad had gone beyond the retaining wall, had crossed Mulberry Street, and were at the Lorraine Motel. They were calling out that Doctor MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot and the shot was believed to have come from an apartment or rooming house north of the fire station. He then ran back to the emergency vehicle which he had previously been assigned to parked in the fire station driveway facing Main Street, and as he got into that vehicle, Patrolman E. E. DOUGLAS also got into the unit with him, and Patrolman DOUGLAS immediately began putting out a radio broadcast that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot.

He does not recall seeing any officer near Canipe's Amusement Center, 424 Main Street, at the time he and Patrolman DOUGLAS got into their emergency unit. After Patrolman DOUGLAS radioed the message that KING had been shot, they then drove their emergency unit out onto Main Street, but instead of turning north toward the building where the shot which hit Doctor KING was believed to have been fired, they turned south on Main Street, circled around the fire station there, and drove onto Mulberry Street and in front of the Lorraine Motel. They stopped momentarily in front of the Lorraine Motel on Mulberry Street and then proceeded on down Mulberry Street to the next street which is Huling Avenue, and they went west on Huling Avenue and around to Main Street where they parked their emergency unit in front of the building in which the shot which hit KING was believed to have been fired. He and Patrolman DOUGLAS got out of that emergency unit and took a position across the street from that building on Main Street to watch for any suspects who might come out of the building. He estimated that it took he and Patrolman DOUGLAS from 2 to 3 minutes from the time Doctor KING was shot until they made that circle around the block and came back to their position in front of the building on Main Street.

He was dressed in dark blue trousers, a royal blue shirt, a dark blue tie, and a blue steel helmet. He does

ME 44-1987

3

not recall anyone in the area who might be described as wearing a light colored upper garment, or wearing anything which might resemble a hood. He does not recall any officers in any of the positions along Main Street in front of that building north of the fire station where he held a position after the shooting. He does not recall Patrolman DOLLARHITE or any other officer running past U. S. Fixtures moments after the shooting. He does not recall seeing any officer near Canipe's Amusement Center, 424 Main Street, immediately after the shooting. Since he and the other Memphis Police Officers were interchanging cars and were switching off to ride with members of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office Deputies in their 3 emergency vehicles, the only persons he can recall as being in the emergency vehicle which he was assigned to at the time of the shooting were Patrolman E. E. DOUGLAS and Lieutenant J. E. CHORNLEY.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 15, 1968

WILLIAM BISHOP KING, 1776 West Lloyd Circle, Memphis, Tennessee, was interviewed at the Central Police Headquarters, and furnished the following information:

KING advised he was regularly assigned to Number 2 Fire Station, Main and Butler, Memphis, and that on April 4, 1968, he had reported to work at 7:00 a.m., and was to work until 7:00 a.m., April 5, 1968. He advised that during this work shift, two officers of the Memphis police force had been on location in the fire station conducting a surveillance of the KING party from a door to the rear of the fire station.

KING stated that he occasionally looked through holes torn in a newspaper which was being used to cover the rear door and to cover the surveilling officers during this period.

KING stated that he had been at the window observing for approximately ten minutes at the time DR. KING was shot. He advised that during this five or ten minute period that he observed, DR. KING came out of his motel room, and stood on the balcony for approximately three minutes prior to the time he was shot. He stated that an individual was standing on the balcony with DR. KING, and that DR. KING appeared to be talking to someone in the courtyard. At this time, KING heard what sounded to be a shot, and he noted DR. KING fall on the balcony. KING advised that he thought that it was a rifle shot because the sound had a zinging tone to it. Immediately DR. KING fell, confusion broke out in the motel. KING advised that he kept his eyes on the balcony, and did not actually look around the area, and that he, himself, was in a stunned state. At this time, someone else in the firehouse made the statement, "Let me see," and he, KING, moved away from the door, and this person moved to the door. KING could not identify this person, and advised that he moved back into the firehouse proper.

KING stated that at the time he was observing the motel, that a Negro officer, a CHARLES STONE, and Lieutenant LOENNEKE were also at the window. He stated that he could furnish no further

97

On 4/13/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
by SAs EDWARD M. QUINN  
SHIELDS W. SMITH / SWS:jms Date dictated 4/13/68

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

names of individuals who might possibly have been observing the motel at the time DR. KING was shot.

KING advised that he thought a shot came from his left, and that at the time he heard the shot, that KING fell approximately the same instant; however, KING stated he could not see any buildings to the left of where he was standing nor could he see the open lot to the left of the firehouse. KING advised that he did not see anyone outside the building, other than those persons in the KING group, prior to the shot. He also advised that following the shot, he did not see any policeman or any other individual in the street before he moved away from the window.

KING advised that he could not identify any other persons whom he had seen on the balcony either prior to or following the shooting of DR. KING as he was not familiar with these individuals by name. He does recall seeing a Negro woman in the doorway of the motel room two doors down from the room of DR. KING immediately after the shooting. He also recalled that the individual standing by DR. KING at the time of the shot was crawling around on the balcony attempting to aid DR. KING. He advised that his view was restricted to either side, and that because of the manner in which the holes were placed in the newspaper, he could only see straight ahead to the motel.

KING could furnish no further information concerning individuals who might have been in or around the motel at the time of the shooting, and could furnish no information concerning any automobiles outside the fire station as he had not gone out of the station immediately following the shooting.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/15/68

1

Patrolman WILLIAM E. GROSS, Memphis Police Department, home address 4728 Tutwiler, Memphis, advised as follows:

On April 4, 1968, he was assigned to one of 3 emergency units which make up what is called a Tact Unit for controlling any disturbances which might occur in Memphis. Those 3 emergency units are made up of 4 men, each of both Memphis Police Officers and Deputies of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. During the day of April 4, 1968, the men assigned to those units changed from one car to the other. For that reason, he does not recall who was in the emergency vehicle with him during the late afternoon of April 4, 1968, except Patrolman BILL DU FOUR (phonetic).

Shortly before 6:00 PM, April 4, 1968, the 3 emergency units parked at the fire station at Main and E. Butler Streets, Memphis, so that they might take a rest break. Since his wife had just gotten out of the hospital, he went to the telephone in the fire station to call and see how she was feeling, as the other men were taking their rest break. That fire station is located south of a building on Main Street in which a shot which killed Doctor KING is believed to have been fired. Between the fire station and that building is a fenced in parking lot with a gate in front.

As he was talking with his wife, he saw the other men in his emergency unit began running out of the fire station. He does not recall hearing any shot, but he knew something was wrong and he immediately told his wife he had to leave and would call her later. He ran out of the fire station after the other men and turned east once outside the fire station, and he ran toward Mulberry Street and the Lorraine Motel. Since a high retaining wall is located at Mulberry Street, he never crossed that retaining wall or Mulberry Street, but when he arrived at that point some of the other police officers who had crossed Mulberry and who were at the Lorraine Motel called out that Doctor KING had been shot and they believed the shot had come from the building north of

99

On 4/13/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987

by SA VINCENT H. LAMMERS  
SA JOE W. PHILLIPS JWP/bbs Date dictated 4/13/68

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

the fire station. He ran back through that passageway which is between the fire station and the fenced in lot just north of the fire station to Main Street. When he arrived at Main Street, he recalls there were 2 Memphis Police Officers and also a Deputy Sheriff already on Main Street in front of the building where the shot was believed to have been fired from, however, he cannot identify either of those 3 officers. He took up a position in front of Canipe Amusement Center at 424 S. Main Street, Memphis. He actually stood on Main Street in front of that doorway. After he took up his position, he recalls seeing a satchel and a rifle in the doorway in front of him. Those items were lying on what appeared to be a green piece of cloth material which appeared to be a blanket or bedspread. He did not touch any of that material, nor did he go near it, but he did watch it from his position.

Shortly after he took up his position, which was within 2 or 3 minutes after he received the report that Doctor KING had been shot, he remained at that spot until the investigation was completed. Immediately after he took his position, 2 other members of the emergency squad came to the parking lot, which was between the building in which he was then standing and the fire station. Those officers went into that parking lot and searched it thoroughly for anyone who might be hiding therein, including a clump of bushes located at the back of the parking lot at the retaining wall. After they found no one hiding in that area, they came out, locked the gate on the parking lot, and the 2 men stood there to guard that gate.

After he had stood at his position for a short time, an individual, who apparently was the operator of Canipe Amusement Center, came out and informed him that he had been ordered to the Memphis Police Station to make a report of what he had seen. He informed that individual that he could not leave the area until he (GROSS) had cleared it with his superior officer. After he cleared it with his superior officer, he told the individual to go ahead. That man then got into his pick-up truck which was parked on Main Street

between the building he was standing in front of and the fire station and drove away, apparently to the police station.

GROSS advised that he observed Inspector N. E. ZACHARY, Memphis Police Department Homicide Squad, and another officer of the Homicide Squad, name unknown, come to the area and collected the satchel, rifle, and green cloth material which he had been standing in front of. He noted they did not touch any of those items, but used handkerchiefs to pick it up. They placed the rifle and the satchel in the green cloth material, then they picked up the green cloth containing the other items and took it all to police headquarters. GROSS observed this from a distance of approximately 10 to 15 feet.

On April 4, 1968, he was wearing dark blue trousers, a royal blue shirt, a dark blue tie, and a blue steel helmet. He does not recall anyone in the area who might have been wearing an upper garment which might be described as white or light colored, and who was wearing an item of clothing which might be described as a hood. He does not recall seeing Patrolman DOLLARITE or any other police officer running on Main Street near the U. S. Fixtures office moments after the shooting.

He advised when the 3 emergency units parked by the fire station shortly before 6:00 PM, April 4, 1968, they parked in the fire station driveway facing the units toward south Main Street. Two emergency units were parked side by side and the third unit was parked directly behind one of the front two. He surmised that if the person who shot Doctor KING had fired the shot from the building north of the fire station on Main Street, and that individual had then run out of the building onto Main Street and had turned south on Main Street, the first thing that individual would have seen would have been 3 police cars in the driveway of the fire station. Although those 3 emergency police vehicles were unmanned, he feels that is possibly what happened in this instance and that is why the suspect dropped the rifle, satchel and green cloth blanket or bedspread, which was in front of the Canipe Amusement Center at 424 S. Main Street.



ME 44-1987

OTHERS IN VICINITY OF CRIME SCENE

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

**1**Date **4/6/68**

**Mr. CHARLES HARDY HURLEY, Advertising Layout Department, National Food Company, 1797 South Florida Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, furnished the following information:**

**Mr. HURLEY said that he parked his car a little south of the Canipe Amusement Company, 424 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, at 4:45 p.m., on April 4, 1968. He said that his car was facing in a northerly direction and was immediately behind a white Mustang vehicle of an unknown year, which was immediately in front of the Canipe Amusement Company. HURLEY said he saw one white male in the Mustang car but could furnish no physical description of the man as it was too dark in the man's car to enable him to get a good look at the man. Mr. HURLEY stated that he looked at the license plate of the Mustang and believed it to be an Arkansas license with the first two letters being "AL." Mr. HURLEY said he could not be positive of the two letters "AL" on the license, but he believed these letters did appear on the license.**

**Mr. HURLEY said that he could furnish no further information regarding the white Mustang and its lone occupant as he, Mr. HURLEY, drove away at 4:48 p.m. on April 4, 1968, and the man was still in the car when he left.**

103

On **4/5/68** at **Memphis, Tennessee** File # **Memphis 44-1987**

by **SAs STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON**  
**and JOHN W. BAUER** SMD:gmh Date dictated **4/5/68**

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/5/68

PEGGY JANE HURLEY, customer services, Seabrook Wallpaper Company, 421 South Main Street, Memphis, advised that at about 4:45 p.m., April 4, 1968, one of the girls in the front showroom called to her and told her that her husband was waiting on the street from her. Upon hearing this she went to the showroom and told the girl that was not her husband's white Falcon but it was a white Mustang. A few minutes later Mrs. HURLEY stated that her husband did pull up in their white Falcon and parked behind the white Mustang which was parked in front of Canipe's Amusements directly across the street. She left work, crossed the street and proceeded home with her husband. She said that when they arrived home they heard on the news that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot at the Lorraine Hotel, and that the suspect had gotten away in a white Mustang. She said that she and her husband began to talk about the white Mustang which was parked right in front of her husband's car when he picked her up on Main Street. She said her husband told her that he noticed that this Mustang had Arkansas license plates on it. He also said that he noticed a white man sitting in the Mustang. He said he was wearing what appeared to be a dark suit. Mrs. HURLEY stated she did remember a man sitting in the car when she left work, but she could not determine what kind of clothes he was wearing or what color hair he had.

104

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987by SA JOHN W. BAUER  
SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON JWB:raj Date dictated 4/5/68

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/7/68

ELIZABETH COPELAND, customer services, Seabrook Wallpaper Company, 421 South Main Street, Memphis, advised that at about 4:45 p.m., April 4, 1968, she saw a white car pull up and park across the street. She said that she called to PEGGY HURLEY to tell her that her husband had arrived as he usually did at this time daily. When PEGGY came to the front showroom she looked out the window and told her, ELIZABETH COPELAND, that the car across the street was not her husband's Falcon but was a Mustang. She stated she looked again at the car and saw there was a white man with dark hair sitting in the driver's seat. She added that she believed the man was wearing a dark colored coat. Mrs. COPELAND stated Mrs. HURLEY's husband pulled up in a few minutes and then proceeded to leave with his wife. At 5:20 Mrs. COPELAND stated that her husband who normally picked her up daily attempted to park across the street, but the curb was completely filled with vehicles and he had to double park next to the white car which she thought was a Mustang. She said when her husband arrived she left work, crossed the street and got in her husband's car and left for home. She advised when she went to get in her husband's car she noticed that there was no one sitting in the white Mustang.

105

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987by SA JOHN W. BAUER  
SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON JWB:raj Date dictated 4/5/68

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/7/68

Mrs. FRANCES B. THOMPSON, Bookkeeper, Seabrook Wall Paper Company, 421 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that she finished work on April 4, 1968, at approximately 4:30 p.m., and was in the company showroom at the front of the store waiting for her daughter. She said that at about 4:30 or 4:45 p.m., she saw a white automobile drive up and park across the street from her in front of Canipe's Amusement Company, 424 South Main Street. Mrs. THOMPSON said she thought the car belonged to PEGGY HURLEY's husband and that he had come to get PEGGY; however, PEGGY looked and said that this car was a Mustang and that Mr. HURLEY would be driving a Falcon.

Mrs. THOMPSON said that her daughter picked her up at approximately 4:45 p.m., and the two of them left the area. She said that when she left at 4:45 p.m., there was a white male sitting in the front seat of the white Mustang. Mrs. THOMPSON was unable to furnish any other information concerning this individual.

106

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987

by SA JOHN W. BAUER  
SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON JWB:raj Date dictated 4/5/68

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/7/68

DAVID HARRISON OWENS, Credit Manager, Seabrook Wallpaper Company, 421 South Main Street, Memphis, advised that on April 4, 1968, in the afternoon, he was working in the warehouse at the rear of the store. He stated that at 6:00 p.m., he went to leave the building in order to go home and he noticed that there were policemen everywhere and there was a great deal of noise in the street.

He said he saw a lot of policemen in front of the doorway at Canipe's Amusement Company and he assumed that there had been a robbery at Canipe's Amusement Company. He stated that he saw several policemen looking down at an object which was lying on the sidewalk in front of the doorway at Canipe's Amusement Company and it appeared to be a large canvas object about twelve inches high and five feet long. Mr. OWENS said that the object reminded him of a large mailbag. He said that when he went to leave the store with Mr. COOKSY and Mr. HOLT, they were questioned by policemen, and were given permission to leave the area, which they did.

107

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987

by SA JOHN W. BAUERSA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON

JWB:raj

4/5/68

by \_\_\_\_\_ Date dictated \_\_\_\_\_

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.

ME 44-1987

PERSONS AT JIM'S GRILL,  
418 SOUTH MAIN STREET

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/15/68

Mr. GEORGE ROWLAND HARDING, Room 3, 386½ South Main Street, advised that he is unemployed and that he is living at this rooming house at the present time. Mr. HARDING stated that on the afternoon of April 4, 1968, he went to Jim's Grill located at 418 South Main and ordered a bowl of chili and a quart of beer.

He further stated that he sat in the last booth with a person by the name of HAROLD PARKER who works for Yellow Cab.

Mr. HARDING stated he was in the grill when a police officer came to the door and instructed everyone to stay in the grill. He said he learned later that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot. He said he feels certain he heard a shot, but did not realize it was a gun that was fired at that time.

Mr. HARDING explained that he had been sleeping most of the day and when he awoke he was hungry. He said he had been drinking heavily before he went to sleep and, therefore, was not too alert when he walked down to Jim's Grill. He stated he does not recall seeing any cars on the street either being driven or parked and does not recall seeing any people on the street before he entered Jim's Grill. Mr. HARDING advised he cannot furnish any additional information concerning the activities that took place in the immediate vicinity of Jim's Grill at the time MARTIN LUTHER KING was shot.

109

On 4/12/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987  
by SA O. JAMES HOLBROOK  
SA HARLEY E. GYLFE HEG:raj Date dictated 4/13/68

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



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/15/68

Mr. ROBERT D. WHEELER, 908 Emery Street, Memphis, advised that he is employed as a driver of a lift truck for M. E. Carter, 415 South Front Street, Memphis.

Mr. WHEELER advised that he got off work at 5:00 p.m., and walked to Jim's Grill located at 418 South Main Street, Memphis. He stated that prior to going to Jim's Grill he was waiting on the corner of South Front Street and Huling Street to get a ride home. He said that when he was unable to get a ride he started walking down the east side of South Main Street. Mr. WHEELER stated that when he was almost in front of Jim's Grill he was told by someone, probably a Memphis Policeman or a Deputy Sheriff, to go inside of Jim's Grill and stay there and then the door was locked.

He said he was walking alone and was not aware of any activity in the immediate area at that time. He said some time after entering Jim's Grill he learned that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot. Mr. WHEELER stated he did not hear the shot and he did not see anyone running, walking or carrying anything in the immediate area. He said he does not recall any cars parked in the immediate area and does not recall seeing any car drive away while he was walking down South Main Street from the intersection of Huling and South Main to Jim's Grill.

Mr. WHEELER advised he cannot furnish any additional information concerning any activity that took place in that immediate area at the time MARTIN LUTHER KING was shot.

Mr. WHEELER said the above activity took place on April 4, 1968.

110

On 4/12/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987

by SA O. JAMES HOLBROOK  
SA HARLEY E. GYLFE HEG:raj Date dictated 4/13/68

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/15/68

Mr. FRANKLIN WILSON RAY, JR., 3639 Allendale Road, Memphis, advised he is employed as a salesman by the Tayloe Paper Company, 420 South Front Street, Memphis.

Mr. RAY advised he left work approximately 5:30 p.m., on April 4, 1968, and walked alone directly to Jim's Grill located at 418 South Main, Memphis. He stated he walked east on Huling Street toward South Main and when he reached the corner of Huling and South Main he walked diagonally across the street to Jim's Grill. He stated he does not recall walking past any cars other than STEVE CUPPLES' 1959 white Chevrolet which was parked across the street from Jim's Grill. He said he recalls there was a line of white cars parked at the curb near the entrance to Jim's Grill.

He said he was not aware of any activity in the neighborhood and that he was playing pinball machine and shuffleboard machine when a deputy sheriff came to the door and advised that no one was to leave until further notice. He said shortly thereafter an individual who he believed to be with the police department came to the door, requested that each one put their name and address on a sheet of paper and it was at that time he learned that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot. He said he does not recall looking out the window while playing the pinball machine and shuffleboard machine, but as soon as the deputy sheriff entered he recalls looking out the window and saw STEVE CUPPLES' 1959 Chevrolet parked across the street and JIMMY WALKER's white Fairlane Ford parked just south of the entrance of Jim's Grill. He added he also saw JOWERS' Cadillac parked directly in front of the entrance of Jim's Grill.

Mr. RAY stated he was concentrating on playing the pinball machine and shuffleboard machine and was not aware of any activity in the immediate neighborhood. He said it was not until sometime later that he learned MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot. He stated he did not hear the shot and cannot furnish any information concerning the activity in the neighborhood such as people walking or running, cars parked or being driven or any other activity.

111

On 4/12/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987

by SA O. JAMES HOLBROOK  
SA HARLEY E. GYLFE HEG:raj Date dictated 4/13/68

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/7/681

ROSIE LEE DABNEY, waitress, Jim's Grill, 418 South Main Street, Memphis, advised that on April 4, 1968, she came on duty at about 3:00 p.m. She stated that everything seemed normal up until about 6:00 p.m. when she heard that a shooting had occurred. She added that she saw nothing out of the ordinary, and could provide no further information.

112

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
SAs JOHN W. BAUER  
by STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON / JWB:jms Date dictated 4/5/68

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

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 15, 1968

Mr. HAROLD E. PARKER, 1054 Meada Street, Memphis, Tennessee, advised he is employed as a driver for Yellow Cab Company, 581 South Second Street, Memphis, Tennessee.

Mr. PARKER advised he got off of work at approximately 4:00 p.m. on April 4, 1968. He stated he left the cab he was driving at the gas pump at approximately 4:00 p.m., checked in with his day's proceedings, and then left in his 1959 white four door Rambler, License Number, Shelby County AS 6131, which is his personally owned auto. He stated he drove this car to the area of Jim's Grill, which is located at 418 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. PARKER stated that it is his estimate that he arrived at approximately 4:15 to 4:20 p.m. at Jim's Grill. He commented that when he arrived, he drove past the Grill, and parked near the intersection of Huling Street and South Main Street. He said he does not recall what cars were on the street at that time, but does recall specifically that Mr. JOWERS' Cadillac was parked almost directly in front of Jim's Grill. He explained that Mr. JOWERS owns and operates Jim's Grill. Mr. PARKER stated he cannot recall what other cars were on the street or what other cars were between his 1959 Rambler and JOWERS' white Cadillac, but believes that there was at least one, if not two, cars between his and JOWERS' car. He stated he has no idea as to the color, make, or model of the cars between his and JOWERS' car.

Mr. PARKER stated he was in Jim's Grill having his evening meal of chili and beer. He said he was sitting in the last booth in the Grill with a person whose name he knows as GEORGE HARDING. He stated he does not know HARDING's occupation or his address, but commented that HARDING frequents Jim's Grill quite regularly. Mr. PARKER added there were a number of people in the Grill during the entire time that he was there, and that there were several young men playing the shuffleboard, ping-pong machine, and the jukebox. He said he was not aware of any activity outside of Jim's Grill until a Deputy Sheriff entered Jim's Grill sometime after 6:00 p.m., and told everyone in the Grill to remain there until they were advised they could leave.

113

On 4/15/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
by SAs HARLEY E. GYLFE  
O. JAMES HOLBROOK / HEG:jms Date dictated 4/15/68

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

Mr. PARKER stated he stayed in his booth the entire time, and did not look out the window at any time until he left. He said he was not aware of what occurred out in the street, and in the immediate area until Mr. JOWERS asked him if he had heard the shooting. He stated he told JOWERS he had not heard any shooting, and was shortly thereafter advised that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot. He stated he definitely did not hear any shot fired while he was in Jim's Grill.

Mr. PARKER stated he did not notice any new faces in Jim's Grill while he was there, but commented the only individual he actually knew was GEORGE HARDING, who shared the booth with him. He said he knew there were a number of regular customers in Jim's Grill, and these were young men who are employed by the Tayloe Paper Company, but he is completely unfamiliar with their names.

Mr. PARKER stated the only car he can remember on the street in front of or in the immediate area of Jim's Grill when he entered Jim's Grill was Mr. JOWERS' white Cadillac. He stated he cannot recall any individual or individuals either walking or running in the immediate area of Jim's Grill when he entered to have his meal. He stated he can furnish no information whatsoever concerning the shooting of MARTIN LUTHER KING on April 4, 1968.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 15, 1968

Mr. JIMMIE RICHARD SANDERS, 1687 Childers Street (Frayser), Memphis, Tennessee, advised he is employed at Wood Parts, Inc., 1590 Texas Street, Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. SANDERS stated that on the evening of April 4, 1968, he left his place of business at Wood Parts, Inc. at approximately 4:00 p.m., and took a bus to the Arcade Restaurant, located at the corner of Calhoun Street and South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, which is approximately one long block from Jim's Grill, located at 418 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. SANDERS stated he walked from the intersection of South Main Street and Calhoun Street to Jim's Grill, and arrived at Jim's Grill at approximately 5:00 p.m. He stated he was alone, and entered Jim's Grill for his evening meal. He stated his reason for eating at Jim's Grill was because he had rented a room at 390 $\frac{1}{2}$  South Main Street for three or four days, which is in the immediate area of Jim's Grill.

Mr. SANDERS stated he sat in a booth for a while and at the counter for a while, ordered his evening meal, and had several beers.

Mr. SANDERS advised that while he was eating his meal, he recalls that at approximately 6:00 p.m. a Deputy Sheriff came to the door of Jim's Grill and advised everyone in the Grill to remain there until advised they could leave. He said that at the time he had no idea as to why everyone was told to stay. He said sometime later everyone in Jim's Grill learned that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been shot that evening from somewhere in the immediate area of Jim's Grill. Mr. SANDERS stated he did not hear the shot that was fired that killed MARTIN LUTHER KING, and added he was not aware that KING was staying in the immediate area of Jim's Grill. Mr. SANDERS commented he did not go to the window to look out after the Deputy Sheriff instructed everyone to stay in the Grill.

Mr. SANDERS advised he was not aware of any cars or people on the street when he walked from the intersection of Calhoun Street and South Main to Jim's Grill. He stated he is

115

On 4/15/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
SAs HARLEY E. GYLFE  
by O. JAMES HOLBROOK / HEG:jms Date dictated 4/15/68

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

ME 44-1987

2

certain there were many cars both parked and being driven on South Main Street, and that there were likely many people walking in this area, but added he was not aware of any particular individual or any particular car in this area. Mr. SANDERS stated he cannot furnish any information whatsoever concerning the shooting of MARTIN LUTHER KING.

ME 44-1987

OTHER PERSONS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH UNKNOWN SUBJECT

YORK ARMS COMPANY  
162 S. MAIN STREET  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

(This section of the report pertains to the purchase of binoculars by the Unknown Subject on April 4, 1968, at York Arms Company, and a subsequent inquiry that was made in the immediate vicinity of York Arms Company.)



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 5, 1968

Mr. RALPH MEREDITH CARPENTER, 4844 Durbin Street, Memphis, Tennessee, telephone 685-5618, advised that he is a salesman at the York Arms Company located at 162 South Main Street, Memphis.

Mr. CARPENTER recalls that yesterday, April 4, 1968, he was in the above mentioned store talking to one of the other salesmen in the store when an individual entered and subsequently bought from him a pair of Bushnell binoculars. This individual entered the store at about 4:00 in the afternoon. Mr. CARPENTER estimates this to be the correct time and, in part, bases his estimate on the fact that there were pickets parading in front of the store at that time. Mr. CARPENTER recalls that as this individual proceeded further into the store he turned to this individual and asked if he could be of assistance. The individual stated that he wished to purchase some binoculars, and Mr. CARPENTER told him that he was about out of binoculars and believed the only ones he had in stock were a pair selling for \$200 and another pair selling for ninety-some dollars. The individual stated that he believed these were too high priced for him, and then Mr. CARPENTER recalled that there might be a cheaper pair of binoculars in the window and advised the individual that he would find out. Mr. CARPENTER thereupon went to the display window in the front of the store and determined that there was on display a pair of Bushnell binoculars selling for \$39.95. He brought these binoculars back to the customer and explained that they were a Japanese import of better quality. The individual seemed to indicate that he either recognized the name or that he agreed that there were some good Japanese imports. The customer raised the binoculars to his eyes and in some manner, not now recalled by Mr. CARPENTER, indicated that these binoculars were acceptable.

Mr. CARPENTER recalls that the customer asked if instructions were in the box, and Mr. CARPENTER advised him that there were instructions in the box, but not much was needed to be known to operate the binoculars, other than to

118

On 4/5/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA ROBERT W. GOODWIN and  
SA RALPH J. LIEWER RJL/acp Date dictated 4/5/68

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

just place them to the eyes and adjust the eye pieces. Mr. CARPENTER recalls that he wrote on the box in which he placed the binoculars the price \$39.95 and the amount of tax which was \$1.60 and added the two figures for a total of \$41.55. He placed the sales slip and the box with the binoculars in it in a gray paper bag which bears the name of York Arms on its side. The binoculars were in a leather or similar type carrying case. The store does not record or maintain serial numbers for these binoculars and it is not known what, if any, serial number was on this particular pair of binoculars.

Mr. CARPENTER stated that the binoculars were Bushnell brand and were 7 by 35 size.

Mr. CARPENTER described the customer as follows:

Race:	White
Sex:	Male
Age:	26 - 32 years
Height:	5 feet 11 inches
Weight:	160 pounds to 175 pounds
Hair:	Black or dark brown, neat, combed straight back and not parted. It was neither very long nor shaggy.
Eyes:	Color not recalled; no glasses worn
Complexion:	Ruddy
Build:	Medium
Scars and marks:	None recalled
Regional accent:	None noticed
Dress:	Dark suit, not known whether or not pants matched coat, but recalls pants did not contrast with coat; color of shoes not known but not in sharp contrast to other clothing; no hat worn; white shirt with noticeably wide space at the collar, neat looking; dark tie with light stripe which covered entire tie, which was tied in a long slender knot which did not fill the space between the collars; tie was noticeably pulled to one side, not in keeping with generally neat appearance of customer; no jewelry remembered.

Facial characteristics: Average fullness; nothing regarding the eyes, nose, ears or other features noticeable. Customer's hands were neat, though nothing outstanding was noticed about them.

Mr. CARPENTER recalls that the individual reached into his right front pants pocket to get the money with which to pay for the binoculars. The money was not in a billfold or a money clip. The customer withdrew two \$20 bills from a roll which contained several other bills, at least two of which Mr. CARPENTER believes were \$20 bills. The customer also took a \$1.00 bill from this roll and then reached into his other front pocket with his left hand and secured two quarters and a nickel, making a total of \$41.55 for the payment. After purchasing the binoculars, the customer walked from the store and Mr. CARPENTER told him to "hurry back" or some similar parting statement, and the customer's reply is not recalled, if any was made. Mr. CARPENTER does not know which direction the customer took after leaving the store.

Mr. CARPENTER does not recall ever having seen this individual before in the store or elsewhere, but feels relatively certain that if he sees him again he would be able to recognize him.

The customer, while in the store, did not ask to see any other merchandise such as rifles or guns or ammunition of any kind, and made no inquiry at all concerning any other merchandise.

Mr. CARPENTER stated that when the customer entered the store CARPENTER was near the front of the store talking to Mr. VERNON YORK. Further back in the store he believes CHARLES GIBSON was near the cash register, and Mr. HUGH BADDLEY, a clerk, was also somewhere in the store. He believes also that possibly Mr. CORDRA YORK, JR., may have been in the store, but he does not know whether or not any of these individuals took notice of the customer.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 4/16/68

SAC ROBERT G. JENSEN and SA RALPH J. LIEWER contacted RALPH M. CARPENTER, an employee of York Arms Company, 162 South Main Street, Memphis. Mr. CARPENTER was informed of the identity of SAC JENSEN and he has previously been interviewed by SA LIEWER. He was told we had an additional group of photographs we would like him to view. He was told that no significance should be attached to the sequence or arrangement the photographs might be in when he saw them. These photographs were laid out, one after another, on the second floor away from bystanders and other employees in the York Arms Company.

CARPENTER spent at least twenty minutes reviewing carefully each of the photographs. He expressed some hesitation for a time between a photograph of one RICHARD SMITH and the photograph of ERIC S. GALT. No names and no identifying data of any kind were furnished to CARPENTER in connection with his study of these photographs. He did state in connection with a photograph of SMITH that he thought this was a local Memphis boy whom he might have seen. He turned this photograph over and did reject the photograph as not being identical to the one to whom he sold the binoculars.

He studied carefully for approximately five minutes the photograph of ERIC S. GALT and made comments concerning the appearance of GALT. He stated the hair was generally similar to the customer but thought it might be just a little bit longer than when the customer had been in the store on April 4. He also said that he recalled the customer he waited on did not have heavy, bushy eyebrows but they were more like the eyebrows in the photograph of GALT. He also stated he had no recollection of seeing GALT's teeth and thought he had a smile when he waited on him. CARPENTER also said he had no independent recollection of GALT's ears appearing as they did in the photograph, but he then said he did not notice them particularly. He did furnish the following statement regarding his identification of the photograph of ERIC S. GALT:

121

On 4/16/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SAC ROBERT G. JENSEN and  
SA RALPH J. LIEWER : bn Date dictated 4/16/68

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

ME #44-1987

"April 16, 1968

"On April 16, 1968, I, Ralph M Carpenter was shown a group of 5 photographs by Special Agent in Charge Robert G Jensen and Special Agent Ralph J Liewer. After careful study of each of these pictures I placed my name on the back of the picture which I feel most resembled the man who bought a set of binoculars from me on April 4, 1968 at York Arms, 162 So. Main St., Memphis, Tennessee. I was not furnished any names or any descriptive data regarding any of the photographs shown. I was also told that no significance should be attached to any sequence or arrangement that the photographs were shown to me. I did turn one photograph over as I thought I recognized this to be a local Memphis boy. I did not however recognize him as the person to whom I sold the binoculars.

"In choosing the photograph I was guided by my best recollection. I remember that the man who bought the binoculars did not have heavy eyebrows and were about medium like the ones in the photograph selected by me. I did not sell any other binoculars on April 4, 1968

"My signature attests that I am in agreement with the information set forth on page one and page two of this statement.

/s/ Ralph M. Carpenter

/s/ Robert G Jensen  
SAC, FBI, Memphis  
April 16, 1968

/s/ Ralph J. Liewer  
Special Agent FBI  
April 16, 1968"

It should be noted that the name "ERIC S. GALT" was not furnished to CARPENTER, nor was he in a position to read the name when he signed the back of the photograph. His concluding remarks, which were made at approximately 11:20 a.m., 4/16/68, were to the effect that, "I don't own a suit. I suppose I will have to buy a suit so that I can go to court."

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date April 16, 1968

On April 16, 1968, a group of five photographs were shown to RALPH M. CARPENTER, an employee of York Arms, 162 South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. The photographs that were shown to him are those of:

JOHN EDWARD THOMAS, Memphis Police Department No. 32206

THEODORE JOHN ADANK, FBI No. 3 871 080

CLINTON CABLE GIBSON, Memphis Police Department No. 91407

ERIC GALT

ROBERT PIERCE SMITH, also known as Richard Smith, 493 Howard Street, Whitehaven, Tennessee, USAF No. 14702464, date of birth

---

123

On 4/16/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SAC ROBERT G. JENSEN :ME Date dictated 4/16/68

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

ME 44-1987

RJL/acp

1

The following investigation was conducted by SA RALPH J. LIEWER and SA ROBERT W. GOODWIN at Memphis, Tennessee, on April 5, 1968:

Mr. CORDRA YORK, JR., 1374 East Crestwood, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that he is one of the owners of the York Arms Company at 162 South Main Street, Memphis, and he does not recall seeing an individual come into the store in the afternoon of April 4, 1968, and purchase a pair of binoculars from Mr. RALPH CARPENTER, one of the salesmen at the store.

Mr. YORK stated that any money taken from such a customer would by this time have been transferred to the banking institution used by the store.

Mr. YORK stated that the York Arms Company does not handle the Remington Game Master model 760 rifle at this time and has not handled it for the past two or three years. He stated that the store has two other branches in the city and he is certain that neither of these stores has handled this particular model of Remington rifle in the past several years; however, to make sure he would contact these stores and in the event they had handled this gun recently would immediately contact the FBI.

Mr. YORK advised that Mr. CHARLES GIBSON, a salesman for the store, is now out of the store and unavailable for interview. He stated Mr. VERNON YORK has left for an extended fishing trip in Florida.

Mr. HUGH BADDLEY, 1537 North Parkway, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that he is a clerk in the York Arms Company, 162 South Main Street. He advised that he recalls that sometime on the afternoon of April 4, 1968, salesman RALPH CARPENTER went to the store's display window and brought back a pair of binoculars which Mr. BADDLEY believes CARPENTER eventually sold to a customer at that time. Mr. BADDLEY stated that he does not recall the customer and cannot describe him.

ME 44-1987

OLIVER REXALL DRUG STORE  
4115 HIGHWAY 51 S  
WHITEHAVEN, TENNESSEE

(This investigation pertains to the purchase of a Gillette shaving kit, which was abandoned by the Unknown Subject, and which was identified from the price sticker appearing thereon as having come from the Oliver Rexall Drug Store.)



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/7/68

Mrs. PEGGY BURNS, 4802 Rickard, telephone number 397-0033, advised she is employed as a saleslady at the Oliver Rexall Drugstore in Whitehaven. Mrs. BURNS stated that she recalls selling a Gillette shaving kit, which was in a clear plastic container, to a white man a little before noon on April 3, 1968. She stated that this shaving kit contained a safety razor, shaving lotion, shaving cream, hair tonic, and deodorant, which is all manufactured by the Gillette Company, and was in a clear plastic container, approximately four inches by six inches.

Mrs. BURNS recalled that a white man came into the Oliver Rexall Drugstore shortly before noon, April 3, 1968, and asked her for a razor. She said she pointed out where the razors were located in her store, and directed him to that area of the store. She advised the white man walked down to this area, and picked out the Gillette shaving kit, and brought it back to the cash register, where she was located. Mrs. BURNS said she could not recall any other items which the white man purchased in her store. She could not recall how he paid for this purchase, and did not recall anything he said while he was paying for the item.

Mrs. BURNS stated that she got the impression from the white man's activities that he was a stranger in the area, and she said she does not believe he has ever been in her store before. She said she is sure that she has never seen him prior to the time he approached her, and she furnished the following description for him:

Race:	White
Age:	45
Height:	5'7"
Weight:	165 pounds
Hair:	Black - could not recall how he combed it or anything further about his hair
Eyes:	Color unknown

126

On 4/4/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # 44-1987  
by SA ORVILLE V. JOHNSON / jms Date dictated 4/6/68

ME 44-1987

2

Remarks:

Had a friendly smile

Dress:

Blue suit

No further descriptive information recalled; recalled seeing no scars and marks.

Mrs. BURNS said she got the impression that this man was alone, and she believed he left the store by himself. She advised she could recall no further information regarding this man's description or his activities while he was in her store.