

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# James Earl Ray Recaptured After Sawing Out of Cell

Petros, Tenn. (AP)—James Earl Ray, serving 99 years for killing Dr. Martin Luther King, jr., made an unsuccessful attempt yesterday to escape from prison.

Ray sawed and hacked his way out of his cell in Brushy Mountain state prison, Tennessee's maximum security facility. But guards recaptured him in less than half an hour before he could find a way to get over the prison wall.

Ray, 42 years old, pleaded guilty to the sniper slaying of King outside a Memphis motel April 4, 1968.

Warden Robert H. Moore said Ray used a hacksaw, apparently slipped to him by his cellmate, Roy Morelock, to cut through one bar of his cell.

"He sawed through the bar and got a clearance of 18 to 24 inches," Moore said. "Then he crawled out and got into a heating tunnel where the tempera-



JAMES EARL RAY

tures sometimes gets up to 400 degrees.

"It apparently got too hot for him in there and he came out. Our guards apprehended him."

Moore said Morelock, serving a life term as a habitual criminal, worked as a prison maintenance man and had access to such tools as a hacksaw.

"I figure Morelock slipped the hacksaw to Ray and they both intended to escape," Moore said. "But guards heard a noise, checked Ray's cell and discovered him missing. Morelock didn't have time to try to get out."

Moore said both Ray and Morelock had been moved from what he called a working area of the prison to its maximum security section. They were put in separate cells.

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

1 Kansas City Times

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 5/4/71  
Edition: Morning  
Author:  
Editor: Paul V. Miner  
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Character: CR  
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Classification: 44-760  
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44-760-1333

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SERIALIZED.....	FILED.....
MAY 5 1971	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

159

#1

# Ray Brothers Heat Up Over Prison 'Hole' Affair

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

3A Kansas City Star

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 11-19-72

Edition:

Author: Harry Jones Jr.

Editor: Paul V. Miner

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Character:

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Submitting Office:

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~~44-760-1334~~

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NOV 21 1972	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	
JK	

Put in 44 file  
of James Earl  
Ray

By Harry Jones, Jr.  
A Member of The Star's Staff  
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Enter now, briefly, the fascinating and conspiratorial world of the Ray brothers—James Earl Ray, 44, John Ray, 38, and Jerry Ray, 37.

The limited glimpse into their lives is occasioned by their expressed concern to The Star over a recent 52-day period which John Ray, convicted of bank robbery, spent in the control unit (commonly called "the hole") at the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kan.

James Earl Ray, who is serving a 99-year sentence in the Tennessee State prison in Nashville for the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., says that he believes that John is being harassed at Leavenworth as part of an effort to persuade him, James Earl Ray, to start co-operating with the FBI in its investigation of the King assassination.

If John Ray thinks this is the reason, he did not say so in either of two letters he has written about it. Rather he chalks his troubles up to the federal government's desire to persecute "right-wingers" and white Southern segregationists.

Jerry Ray, the youngest brother and the only one not in prison, tends to lean toward brother James's theory, adding that he believes the FBI also would like to pressure him and John to start co-operating, thinking they know things they have not yet told.

James Earl Ray, meanwhile, continues to maintain that he was coerced into confessing to the slaying of the famed civil rights leader. And John Ray insists that he is serving an 18-year sentence at Leavenworth for a bank robbery he did not commit.

James Earl Ray is not yet talking much about the "conspiracy" in which he may or may not have been involved, but Jerry Ray said last week by telephone that his brother did not fire at Dr. King, that two other men were involved and "used" James Earl Ray to implicate him while he was in Memphis on the evening of the murder. He added he does not know the identity of these two men or their motive.

But it was John's plight, not



JOHN RAY



JAMES RAY



JERRY RAY

James's, about which the three brothers have written and Jerry Ray has telephoned The Star.

Prison officials at Leavenworth, interviewed Friday, readily acknowledge that John Ray spent from Sept. 19 until Nov. 10 in "the hole," but say that this had nothing to do with James Earl Ray. They said it was because John Ray had refused (1) to work in the shoe repair shop with a Negro, and (2) to live in a racially integrated, 6-man cell in Cell Block "A".

James Earl Ray's letter (it appears to be from him, anyway; it was mailed here by an intermediary and Jerry Ray vouches for its authenticity) objects to efforts by prison officials at Leavenworth last year to confine John Ray in an 8-man cell with seven black prisoners "under the guise that they want to integrate the prison."

"There are indications," James Earl Ray wrote, "that this integration pitch by prison officials is just a simple ploy by the officials—who are under the control of the J.D. (U.S. Justice Department)—to have someone maimed who won't co-operate with them in matters outside the jurisdiction of prison officials, then, if the blacks go for it, the officials can blame the resulting violence on the black prisoners."

Officials at Leavenworth say that there are no 8-man cells there, that the largest are 6-man cells and that while they are all racially integrated, the integration is always balanced so that a 5-1 ratio would never

develop, black on white or white on black.

James Earl Ray's letter adds that when he was awaiting trial in Memphis and his "alleged defense attorney" was trying to talk him into pleading guilty, "one of the arguments this attorney used . . . was that if no such plea was forthcoming then I could expect harassment against certain family members and the J.D. might actually arrest one or both of my brothers in some connection with the crime I was charged with."

James Earl Ray enclosed a copy of a statement he said the court would not allow to become a part of the court record alleging that after he had pleaded guilty an FBI agent visited him in prison and told him "that he wanted to find out those responsible for Martin Luther King's death, and he expected my co-operation."

He then quoted the agent as having told him that if he maintained an unco-operative attitude, "I could expect my brothers, John and Jerry, to be down here keeping me company."

Both of James Earl Ray's brothers did have trouble with the law after the King assassination, but no concrete evidence has been brought forth to link these troubles with their notorious brother.

John Ray was convicted of robbing the Bank of St. Peters in eastern Missouri on Oct. 26, 1970, with two other men. About \$53,000 was taken in the robbery.

Jerry Ray was arrested in July, 1970, and charged with ag-

gravated assault in the shooting of a 17-year-old youth at the headquarters of the National States Rights Party, a white supremacist group, in Savannah, Ga.

A jury found him innocent in November of that year, however, after testimony was presented that Jerry Ray had shot the youth in self-defense after he found him trying to steal records from the headquarters.

Jerry Ray said the youth was a member of the American Nazi Party and was trying to steal the names of all N.S.R.P. members for its own use.

Jerry Ray was identified then as both a security guard for the N.S.R.P. headquarters and a campaign manager for the Georgia gubernatorial candidacy that year of J. B. Stoner, an N.S.R.P. leader. Stoner, who is one of James Earl Ray's attorneys, more recently ran for the U.S. Senate in Georgia. He lost both races.

It was Stoner who first informed The Star that John Ray was having trouble in Leavenworth. Jerry Ray followed this up with a call of his own.

In a follow-up letter, Jerry Ray wrote that the FBI in St. Louis is "trying to get me on a phony bank robbery charge." By telephone yesterday, he added that federal orders had been issued that any time he or his brother John (when he was free) was found near a robbery, they were to be picked up and held.

The details of how John Ray wound up in "the hole" at Leavenworth vary, according to who is telling them. Combining John's version with that offered by C. J. Malley, assistant warden for custody and S. R. Witkowski, case management coordinator at the prison, this is how it happened:

All agree that John Ray stayed out of trouble from the day he entered the penitentiary in May, 1971, until September of this year.

It is also agreed that John Ray was assigned to work in the shoe repair shop at the prison and had worked there for some time without incident until, according to Ray, a "half-Jew, half-Indian" was assigned to work there with him.

Malley said that only two men work in this shop and because knives are necessary in shoe repair, the two men are normally locked inside the shop during working hours.

"One day out of a clear blue sky," John Ray wrote, "the nut (the 'half-Jew, half-Indian') ran at me with a knife. I took it away from him. Other inmates told me I should cut his throat, since it would be justified."

The man was transferred to another federal institution after this happened, Ray wrote.

Neither Witkowski nor Malley said he had heard of such an incident.

They do agree, however, that on Sept. 10 a Negro inmate was assigned to work with Ray in the shoe repair shop. (Ray refers to him as "a crazy Negro.")

"I immediately went to a guard and asked for a transfer," John Ray said. "He told me to go back and work with him."

"I decided I had three

choices: (1) kill the trouble-making guard, (2) kill the crazy Negro, (3) go to (my) cell and wait until court (the prison adjustment committee) opened and get a transfer. I take No. 3. At the time I figured it was the least of three evils. Judge Malley called me a racist and said I refuse to work."

John Ray said he was ordered moved from his single cell to a 6-man, racially integrated cell as punishment, citing the racial make-up of the other inmates rather than the number of cellmates as the element of punishment involved.

Malley and Witkowski acknowledged they could understand why Ray, his attitudes on race being what they are, might think this, but insist that the punishment involved simply loss of the privacy of a 1-man cell. Most inmates regard the single cells as a privilege to be sought.

Malley disputed John Ray on other important parts of his story.

He said Ray was told he could work at some other job if he did not want to work with the black inmate in shoe repair, but that it would be unfair to move the black from the job just because Ray wanted him moved. The black was better qualified at shoe repair than Ray, Malley added.

Ray refused to take any other job, he said, insisting the black inmate be given another assignment.

After disciplining Ray by taking him out of the single cell, Malley added, Ray chose on his own to go to solitary confinement rather than an integrated cell.

Malley said that John Ray agreed on Nov. 10 to work in the prison paint shop, whereupon he was released from "the hole" and placed in a 2-man cell. His cellmate, he said, is white.

The policy at Leavenworth, he said, is never to force men of different races into the same 2-

man cell but to keep all 6-man cells integrated on a balanced basis. To have racially segregated 6-man cells, Witkowski added, would be to encourage various ethnic groups—particularly Chicanos—to seek the same type segregation for themselves.

Witkowski added that to practice racial segregation at the prison would be to defy the U.S. Supreme Court.

Asked why they would place two men of opposite races in a locked, shoe-repair shop in which knives were available—especially when the white's brother was thought to have killed Dr. King—but not put two such men in a double cell against the wishes of either, Malley said the two situations were different.

John Ray's comments on racial integration in prison included the observation: "Strange Nixon don't want to integrate a suburb, but will send a white segregation(ist) to months in solitary because he don't want

to live in a combination bedroom and toilet with a Negro."

"This sneaky Nixon would do the same for the suburbs if he could get away with it," he added.

John Ray revealed other attitudes on politics and race in his writing, asserting, for instance, that the Justice Department is persecuting "right-wingers" while letting "black militants" alone.

He objected to the Justice Department's efforts to deny paroles to such persons as Robert B. DePugh, founder of the rightist Minutemen organization, and (an apparent reference to himself) "a person who (has) been convicted of robbing a jew-controlled bank."

When asked to interview John Ray personally at the prison Friday, Malley and Witkowski refused, citing Bureau of Prisons regulations prohibiting newsmen from interviewing federal prisoners. This general policy has been challenged in court and a final decision is pending.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Lawyer Backs Ray in King Case

Memphis (AP)—James Earl Ray claimed he was standing on a sidewalk outside a rooming house when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was killed in 1968 and ran away because he knew he was in trouble, Ray's first attorney testified yesterday.

Arthur Hanes, Sr., of Birmingham, Ala., testifying in a U.S. District Court hearing on whether Ray should be allowed to nullify an earlier guilty plea in King's death, said Ray told him he had gone to the rooming house and met a contact named "Raoul," talked with the man and then went downstairs and "had a beer or two."

"He was standing out on the sidewalk in front of the rooming house at 6:01 p.m. when the shot was fired," Hanes told the court. He said that Ray was scared and fled.

Earlier, Ray had testified that when asked about a conspiracy in the slaying, he said he was "never associated with more than one person." He did not identify the person and was not asked his name.

The statement came as Ray concluded his testimony in a U.S. District Court hearing on whether he may withdraw his guilty plea and stand trial in

the 1968 assassination of the civil rights leader.

Hanes's account of Ray's version of his whereabouts when King was killed was the first sworn testimony to challenge police theories that Ray shot King from a bathroom in the rooming house.

Hanes said he had asked Ray 100 times, "Did you fire the shot that killed Dr. King?"

"Invariably the answer was no," Hanes said.

Hanes said Ray told him that on the night of April 2 his 30-06 rifle was "taken" from a motel in Mississippi and that he did not see it again "until it was thrown down" with a bundle containing Ray's personal effects and binoculars near the rooming house after the shots were fired.

Hanes said that when the rifle was taken, Ray was left a note telling him to come to the rooming house on Memphis's Main Street at 3 p.m. April 4. According to Ray's account, Hanes said, Ray drove into the area and parked seven or eight blocks away.

"He walked to the rooming house and checked in and then his contact contacted him and asked where his car was parked," Hanes said.

According to Ray, Hanes said, the contact had him get the car and park it near the rooming house. Ray then was told to buy the binoculars. Hanes said Ray returned to a room at the rooming house, according to Hanes's testimony.

"At 5:20 p.m. the contact told him 'Jim, you go down and get yourself a beer at Jim's grill.' " Hanes gave as Ray's account.

Hanes and his son, Arthur Hanes, Jr., were dismissed as Ray's attorneys in November 1968, two days before Ray was scheduled to go on trial for murdering King.

Ray touched on the conspiracy theory only briefly yesterday when he was asked whether he had told his former attorney, Percy Fore-

man of Houston, everything about his actions in the case.

Ray said he told Foreman all the details "but I didn't tell him about anybody else, their names or addresses." He said he had no addresses but had "a couple of phone numbers."

Ray said he later was pressed by an author, William Bradford Huie, who was writing about the case, for the names of coconspirators.

"The conspirators, I never was associated with more than one person," Ray said. "I don't believe I ever used the word 'conspirator' or 'conspiracy.' "

Ray seeks a trial on grounds that Foreman coerced his plea and his former attorneys were guilty of a conflict of interest because of their rights to literary royalties from a book about the case.

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

Page 15A

Kansas City Times

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 10-31-74

Edition: Main

Author:

Editor: John Chandley

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Submitting Office:

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OCT 31 1974	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

*Mitchum*

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

## Ray Claims State Had No Case

Memphis (AP)—James Earl Ray testified yesterday he believed the state had only a circumstantial case and couldn't have convicted him of murder in the 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ray told a federal court hearing that his attorney, Percy Foreman, Houston, urged him in early 1969 to plead guilty because Foreman argued there was a 100 per cent chance of him being found guilty and a 99 per cent chance he would get the death penalty if he went to trial.

"I told him I thought that was ridiculous, that the state would rely on circumstantial evidence, and the most they could convict me of, if they convicted me, was aiding and abetting," Ray said.

Ray pleaded guilty in March 1969 to murder and was sentenced to a 99-year prison term.

The U.S. Supreme Court yesterday upheld Ray's effort to obtain evidence about the circumstances of his guilty plea, upholding a federal court order that his former attorneys surrender documents connected with the case.

Ray testified Friday that royalties from a book about his part in the slaying were more important to his lawyers than trying to prove him innocent.

Ray said that Birmingham, Ala., attorney, Arthur Hanes, Sr., sold the book rights of Ray's story to author William Bradford Huie. Ray said he suspected Huie of hurting his defense by disclosing confidential information.

The evidentiary hearing before Judge Robert McRae was ordered in January by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit. Ray first tried to

get a full trial six weeks after entering his guilty plea March 10, 1969.

King, the civil rights leader, was gunned down as he stood on a Memphis motel balcony April 4, 1968.

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

Page 12B

Kansas City Times

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 10-30-74

Edition: Main

Author:

Editor: John Chandley

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44

Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

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SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 30 1974	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Ray Denies Shot But Takes Blame

Memphis (AP)—James Earl Ray says he did not shoot Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "but I believe I am partly responsible for his death."

The statement came in a letter introduced into evidence at a U.S. District Court hearing at which Ray is seeking to retract his plea of guilty to the slaying of the civil rights leader here in 1968.

The letter was written by Ray to Sen. James O. Eastland (D-Miss.) on March 14, 1969, four days after he entered his plea of guilty in the King slaying.

Asked at the court hearing yesterday what the wording of his letter to Eastland meant, Ray replied, "I assumed you could be involved in some kind of crime and not have knowledge of it. I had no direct knowledge."

Ray's attorneys contend Ray, 46, was the "fall guy" of a conspiracy carried out by others.

Ray also testified that on the afternoon of the King assassination April 4, 1968, he had rented a room across the street from the motel where King was murdered, believing there would be "some kind of meeting between me and another party up there."

He did not elaborate, but his attorneys have said he thought he was going to discuss the gun-running business.

Ray said he could not ac-

count for the discovery on the street nearby of his binoculars and .30-06 rifle, which the state contends was fired from the rooming house bathroom.

Ray's fingerprints were on the rifle.

Ray testified he had witnesses who could tell of his whereabouts 11 minutes before the assassination. He said he had kept the information to himself because he feared the FBI would find the witnesses and harass them.

Ray was not asked before the hearing was recessed for the day where he was at the time of King's slaying.

Ray claims his former attorney, Percy Foreman of Houston, coerced him into pleading guilty and that both Foreman and another former attorney for Ray, Arthur Hanes, Sr., of Birmingham, Ala., were more interested in literary royalties on his case than in preparing his defense.

Ray said Foreman talked him into what he thought would be a "technical plea of guilty to get me out of town to the penitentiary." He said that he was unable to get Foreman to withdraw from the case, so he decided to plead guilty, then retract the plea, obtain a new attorney and reopen the case.

"I didn't want to drag out

the case because I thought my health was deteriorating," he said.

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

Page 18A

Kansas City Star

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 10-30-74

Edition: Main

Author:

Editor: George Berg

Title:

Character:

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Classification: 44

Submitting Office:

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SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 31 1974	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

*McAtam*

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Ray Testifies In King Case

Memphis (AP)—James Earl Ray testified yesterday for the first time in an effort to win a trial in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and said he suspected an author, William Bradford Huie, was a source of information to his prosecutors.

Ray told a federal court hearing he became worried when Huie "wrote something linking me to the K.K.K. (Ku Klux Klan)," and that he complained to a late Criminal Court judge, Preston Battle.

Ray said that he learned from reading Huie's articles and books that "his whole technique was to get someone to incriminate themselves and then he'd give them money. I thought maybe he was trying to do the same thing on me."

Ray said he also was suspicious of Huie because the original list of 300 witnesses was increased by about 30 after he talked with the writer.

"I assumed Huie might have said something to the newspapers and the prosecution got some more witnesses or something," he said.

Ray took the stand on the fourth day of his hearing to determine whether he is entitled to withdraw his guilty plea and stand trial for murdering King on April 4, 1968. He is serving a 99-year sentence for the murder.

Ray claims he was coerced into the plea by a former attorney, Percy Foreman, of

Houston, and that Foreman and another former attorney, Arthur Hanes, Sr., of Birmingham, Ala., were guilty of a conflict of interest because of contracts they had with Huie for royalties on a book about the case.

Ray told of the events leading up to his guilty plea March 10, 1969, for the slaying of King as the civil rights leader stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel here.

Ray was a party to the contracts which at first involved Huie, Hanes and, later, Foreman, when Foreman replaced Hanes as Ray's lawyer.

Ray's new attorneys have challenged the claim that Hanes and Foreman were seeking through the contracts to recover their legal fees.

"I never got any money," Ray said.

Ray said after his June 1968 capture in London he had inquired about the availability of Hanes and F. Lee Bailey to represent him because they were the only two nationally known attorneys whose hometowns he knew. He said later Hanes wrote him saying "he accepted the case, although actually I didn't think I had asked him."

He said Hanes later met with him in the London prison. At a later meeting Hanes showed up with contracts giving the lawyer Ray's power of attorney and assign-

ing Hanes 40 per cent of all money that might develop "from the communications industry."

Ray testified that Hanes recommended he drop an appeal of his extradition to the United States. Hanes gave no reason, Ray said.

After his return to the United States, Ray said, "I suggested maybe we should find some other way to finance the trial. I didn't think it would take all that much money to finance the trial. He felt strongly that was the only way to derive the necessary funds."

The defense later introduced copies of several contracts Ray said he had not seen until recently.

One was signed by Huie and Hanes before Ray's extradition and provided that Huie would pay \$35,000 to Ray and Hanes, but only after Ray was returned to the United States.

"Were you aware of this contract when Hanes advised you to waive your extradition appeal?" asked James H. Lesar, Ray's current attorney. "No," said Ray.

The defense also produced a contract signed by Huie with Dell Publications. It discussed the release of Huie's novel on March 15, 1969—five days after Ray claims he was coerced into the guilty plea.

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

Page 4B

Kansas City Times

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 10-26-74  
Edition: Main  
Author:  
Editor: John Chandley  
Title:

Character:  
or  
Classification:  
Submitting Office:  
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SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 29 1974	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

*Mitchem*



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Ray Faces Quizzing On Claim

Memphis (AP)—James Earl Ray will be cross-examined this week on his contention that he was coerced into pleading guilty to the 1968 murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

At a U.S. District Court hearing on his efforts to withdraw that plea and win a new trial, Ray testified Friday that royalties from a book about his part in the slaying were more important to his attorneys than trying to prove him innocent.

Ray took the stand, criticizing his former attorneys, Arthur Hanes, Birmingham, Ala., and Percy Foreman, Houston. Ray, serving a 99-year sentence in the state prison, insists Foreman co-

erced him into entering the guilty plea in March, 1969.

"I saved James Earl Ray's life," Foreman once said. "If I hadn't negotiated that sentence for him, he'd have drawn the death penalty."

Earlier, Ray said, Hanes had sold book rights for Ray's story to William Bradford Huie, an author. Ray said he suspected Huie of hurting his defense by disclosing confidential information.

"It appeared I was being a state's witness against myself," Ray said.

The evidentiary hearing before Judge Robert McRae was ordered in January by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Ray first tried to get a full

trial six weeks after he pleaded guilty to King's murder on March 10, 1969.

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

Page 7A

Kansas City Star

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 10-27-74

Edition: Main

Author:

Editor: George Berg

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

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SERIALIZED FILED

OCT 29 1974

FBI - KANSAS CITY

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Ray 'Wanted Popularity'

Memphis (AP) — A federal court hearing on James Earl Ray's bid for a new trial in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ended yesterday, after testimony that Ray acted alone and thought the slaying would make him

"the most popular man in America."

U.S. District Judge Robert McRae, Jr., did not say when he might rule on Ray's petition to withdraw his guilty plea and stand trial in the April 4, 1968, assassination. But the judge indicated he

would be working on the case at least through the Christmas holidays.

At the end of the eighth day of the hearing, McRae gave lawyers until Dec. 13 to file arguments and other docu-

ments concerning the evidence.

Ray will resume serving his 99-year sentence at the state penitentiary in Nashville.

Bernard Fensterwald, a Ray attorney, told newsmen after the hearing there was "a very good chance of getting a new trial."

McRae said he expected the case to be appealed to the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, regardless of his ruling.

The only testimony offered yesterday was the sworn statement given April 3 by Percy Foreman, of Houston, who was one of Ray's former attorneys. In his statement that was read into the court record, Foreman said in "my considered judgment, Ray acted alone" and there was no conspiracy to kill King.

Foreman described Ray as a racist who thought the assassination of the civil rights leader would make him "the most popular man in America."

"He thought everybody thought like he thought, and he thought the killing of Martin Luther King would make him the champion of the white race, that he would be the most popular man in America," Foreman said. "He could not think of anybody not to be a racist if they were white."

Foreman negotiated a waiver of the death penalty in exchange for Ray's guilty plea and a 99-year sentence, which would make Ray eligible for parole in 33 years.

Ray pleaded guilty in the original trial before a jury was empaneled or testimony heard.

Foreman said he entered the case to save Ray's life.

Foreman quoted Ray as saying he had intentionally placed his fingerprints on a 30.06-caliber rifle found near the scene of King's slaying. Authorities have identified the rifle as the murder weapon.

"He didn't want to be caught, but he wanted credit," Foreman said.

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

Page 5B

Kansas City Times

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 11-2-74

Edition: Main

Author:

Editor: John Chandley

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NOV 4 1974	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

*McAdams*



STATE OF MISSOURI  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
JEFFERSON CITY

GEORGE M. CAMP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

April 13, 1976

Mr. Clarence M. Kelley, Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Kelley:

It is our understanding that the Attorney General has under consideration a review of the events that led up to the death of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. Either as part of that review, or as an independent review, we request that you initiate an investigation into the activities of James Earl Ray while he was an inmate at the Missouri State Penitentiary in the early and mid-1960's, including his escape from that institution in 1967.

Recently we reviewed the facts available to us and concluded that James Earl Ray's escape did not involve the complicity of Missouri prison officials and that he was not a "merchant" within the Penitentiary. However, the State of Missouri has neither the resources nor the legal authority to conduct an investigation that could lead to a review of facts and interviews outside the State of Missouri. As part of your investigation, we ask that you review the material in our possession. We, of course, do not have access to the material and information that your agency and the U. S. Attorney's Office developed in the course of the investigation and the prosecution of James Earl Ray, and therefore think that your office is in the best position to be absolutely sure that no stone has been left unturned.

We stand ready to assist and cooperate with you and look forward to hearing from you as soon as you have made a decision on the course of action you wish to take.

GMC:mac

cc: Governor Christopher S. Bond  
Attorney General Edward H. Levi  
✓ Bill D. Williams, Regional  
Director, FBI, Kansas City, Mo.  
Reverend Emanuel Cleaver  
Attorney General John Danforth

Very truly yours,  
GEORGE M. CAMP  
Deputy Director

44-760-1341

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 16 1976	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

*Lawrence L. Graham*  
LAWRENCE L. GRAHAM  
Director

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**George M. Camp, Deputy Director**  
**JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65101**



Mr. Bill D. Williams  
Regional Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
U. S. Courthouse Bldg. Room 300  
811 Grand  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106



STATE OF MISSOURI  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
JEFFERSON CITY

GEORGE M. CAMP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

April 13, 1976

Mr. Clarence M. Kelley, Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Kelley:

It is our understanding that the Attorney General has under consideration a review of the events that led up to the death of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. Either as part of that review, or as an independent review, we request that you initiate an investigation into the activities of James Earl Ray while he was an inmate at the Missouri State Penitentiary in the early and mid-1960's, including his escape from that institution in 1967.

88-13214  
Recently we reviewed the facts available to us and concluded that James Earl Ray's escape did not involve the complicity of Missouri prison officials and that he was not a "merchant" within the Penitentiary. However, the State of Missouri has neither the resources nor the legal authority to conduct an investigation that could lead to a review of facts and interviews outside the State of Missouri. As part of your investigation, we ask that you review the material in our possession. We, of course, do not have access to the material and information that your agency and the U. S. Attorney's Office developed in the course of the investigation and the prosecution of James Earl Ray, and therefore think that your office is in the best position to be absolutely sure that no stone has been left unturned.

We stand ready to assist and cooperate with you and look forward to hearing from you as soon as you have made a decision on the course of action you wish to take.

GMC:mac

cc: Governor Christopher S. Bond  
Attorney General Edward H. Levi  
Bill D. Williams, Regional  
Director, FBI, Kansas City, Mo.  
Reverend Emanuel Cleaver  
Attorney General John Danforth

GEORGE M. CAMP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Very truly yours,

44-760-1342  
GEORGE M. CAMP  
Deputy Director

SEARCHED INDEXED  
SERIALIZED FILED  
APR 23 1976  
FBI - KANSAS CITY  
Lawrence L. Graham  
Director Weaver



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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
JEFFERSON CITY

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Deputy Director

44-760-1342  
LAWRENCE E. GRAHAM  
Director



F B I

Transmit in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via Airtel

(Precedence)

4/26/76

(Date)

To: SAC, Kansas City (Encls. 2)

From: Director, FBI

MURKIN

Enclosed are two copies of a letter dated 4/13/76, from the State of Missouri, Department of Social Services, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Kansas City, promptly contact George M. Camp, Deputy Director, and/or Lawrence L. Graham, Director, State of Missouri, Department of Social Services, acknowledge receipt of this letter, and interview them for full details regarding any information they may desire to furnish re captioned matter. Review the material referred to in this letter to determine if it is pertinent to captioned matter. Advise them all of the information they furnish will be furnished to the CRD, USDJ, for its consideration as to whether any additional Federal action is warranted. If they have any further questions, they may consider communicating directly with the CRD, USDJ, Washington, D. C. 20530.

Promptly submit results. Conduct no additional investigation at this time.

1 - SAC, Memphis (44-1987) (Info) (Enclosure) (Enclosed is a copy of incoming.)

(Do not type below this line.)

44-760-1343

SEARCHED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	INDEXED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SERIALIZED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FILED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
APR 28 1976	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

Re: [Signature]  
[Signature]  
[Signature]

No handle  
by 5/5/76.  
4/28/76  
[Signature]

(This line for LEFT MARGIN.)

(Do not type BEYOND THIS MARGIN.)

Airtel

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APR 28 1976	
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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Inmate Describes Ray's Escape

J.J. Maloney was an inmate at the Missouri State Penitentiary in 1967 when James Earl Ray escaped. Less than two years later Ray was sentenced to prison after he pleaded guilty to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

After Ray's escape in Missouri a fellow prisoner who claimed to have helped him told Maloney details of the escape.

By J.J. Maloney  
A Member of the Staff  
© The Kansas City Star, 1976

How James Earl Ray fled the Missouri State Penitentiary is as much a matter of dispute today as it was the day of the escape nine years ago.

Ray's version is that he climbed a water pipe and pulled himself to the top of the prison wall using a 4-foot steel hook stolen from the prison's kitchen.

Prison officials maintain that he escaped hidden in a large box containing bread being transported to an honor farm.

A persistent theory since the slaying April 4, 1968, of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and one that has been revived recently, is that Ray was allowed to escape so that he could participate in the slaying of the civil rights leader. However, there has been no evidence uncovered to support this theory.

(Ray pleaded guilty to the murder and was sentenced to 99 years in a Tennessee state prison. Shortly afterward he repudiated his plea and has claimed since that he was coerced into pleading guilty by Percy Foreman, his lawyer. Jerry Ray, a brother, said a federal appeals court is expected to rule early this month on Ray's appeal seeking a trial.)

Most persons who have investigated and written about Ray's escape have accepted the version offered by prison officials—that Ray escaped in the box being used to transport bread.

It also has been generally conceded that in order for Ray to escape in the box he had to have an accomplice. The bread box measured about 4- by 3- by 3-feet, and was large enough to allow Ray to crouch down inside and then be

covered by a layer of fresh-baked bread.

Let unanswered until now was whether the accomplice was a guard or a convict. If he was a convict, did prison officials turn their heads while the escape took place?

Shortly after Ray escaped nine years ago—and almost a year before King was murdered—one of my best friends (call him Smith) told me the details of the escape.

Smith, an inmate, was not the sort of man to tell the story out of braggadocio or any attempt to enhance himself in my eyes. He told me, simply, because he was worried.

Smith had agreed to help a man other than Ray escape in the bread box. The other man, also a good friend of mine, had planned to escape Sunday, April 23, 1967—the day Ray escaped.

According to Smith, the mutual friend was late for work in food service that day.

The bread box was sitting in the kitchen, empty, he said, when James Earl Ray walked up to the box, climbed in and asked Smith to cover him with the layer of bread.

Smith said he was caught in a bind—he had promised to help the other man escape in the box, but Ray was already in it and at any moment a guard might come along and catch Ray.

If that happened, he said, Ray surely would feel that hesitation on Smith's part had caused Ray to be caught trying to escape. Many prisoners also would have called Smith a stool-pigeon for "causing" Ray to be caught.

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

Page 1

Kansas City Star

Kansas City, Mo.

Date: 5/3/76  
Edition: Main  
Author: J. J. Maloney  
Editor: William W. Baker  
Title:

Character:  
or  
Classification: 44  
Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

44-760-1241  
SEARCHED INDEXED  
SERIALIZED FILED

MAY 3 1976

FBI - KANSAS CITY

So he covered Ray with bread. And later, when the pickup truck that was to transport the bread to the honor farm arrived, he wheeled the bread box to the truck and personally loaded it (someone else might have noticed, and commented on, the unusual heaviness of the box).

But before the box was loaded on the truck, the man who was supposed to have escaped arrived and saw that the bread box was loaded and ready to go. He knew there was no reason why the bread box had to be loaded that early. He also knew that Smith wasn't the sort of man to cop out at the last minute—so he surmised that there must be someone else in the bread box.

The man asked Smith who was in the bread box. Smith said no one. So the other man walked over to a table and picked up a French bread knife and declared that with no one in the bread box, it would make no difference if he ran the knife through the bread.

Just as he started to shove the knife into the bread Smith grabbed his arm and stopped him. The man just looked at Smith for a moment, then walked away.

Smith tried to talk to him later—to try to make him understand that under the circumstances Smith had no choice but to help Ray. But the friend walked away from him each time Smith tried to explain.

So Smith came to me, and I agreed to talk with the other man about it. He was irritated that Smith had told me about the planned escape, and he refused to modify his bitterness toward Smith (the two had been close until the incident).

His anger was intensified because he had never liked Ray.

After an extensive search, Smith was located recently. He was extremely reluctant to talk about the escape. He finally conceded again that he had been involved, but expressed fear of getting in trouble. Even though assured his name would be kept confidential and not be printed, later efforts to contact him for additional details were unsuccessful.

Smith's story doesn't make clear how or why two inmates would happen to plan identical escapes the same day.

The idea of being smuggled out in the bread box did not originate with either man.

I worked in the prison kitchen in early 1960, and even then convicts joked about using the bread box to escape. But no one tried it because it was thought that the guards in the truck tunnel searched the bread box (the truck tunnel is an enclosure where every vehicle entering or leaving the prison is searched.)

But another friend of mine, Ronald Westberg, cultivated the friendship of a trusty working in the truck tunnel, and learned through him that the guards did not search through the bread.

Westberg (who hanged himself in his prison cell in December, 1970) wanted to use the bread box, but he was so notorious in the prison that the guards and civilian workers in the kitchen area generally made sure they knew where he was. He might have gotten into the box, but he would have been missed before the truck came to get the bread.

Once a convict is reported missing in the prison—especially a convict like Westberg who had a record of several attempted escapes—all vehicular traffic in the prison is stopped, and every vehicle is thoroughly searched.

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The theory that Ray was allowed to escape was addressed briefly by William Bradford Huie in his book "He Slew the Dreamer." Huie wrote, "Many people, both in the United States and abroad, believe that Ray was 'let out' of the prison on order of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation so that these agencies could 'use him as a decoy just as they used Oswald in the murder of John F. Kennedy.'"

That theory has received impetus most recently from the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, who assumed the leadership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference after King's assassination.

Abernathy was responding to a lengthy article in Time magazine, which on Jan. 26 ran excerpts from a book to be published later this year. The book alleges that Ray was a drug dealer who smuggled dope in with the assistance of prison guards and sent \$100 bills to his brother through a guard.

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However, Ray's drug dealing apparently took place between early 1962 and early 1963. A former friend of Ray's, and himself a drug dealer in the prison, said he did not hear of Ray selling any drugs after 1963.

Asked if he had ever known Ray to use drugs, he replied, "You know, I never did see him use any."

This source said that Ray dealt in drugs of good quality and in significant quantities during that period of approximately one year. Asked if he thought Ray could have accumulated \$7,000 in that 1-year period, he said, "I wouldn't be surprised if he made more than that."

That same man, however, says adamantly that he had never heard Ray utter a racist comment. When told a book would be published in September stating that Ray became "galvanized" at the sight of Martin Luther King on the television screen, he said:

"Ray wasn't that kind of person. He wouldn't get upset over anything on television. Ray just didn't care that much about anything."

However, theories that Ray's drug dealings were aided by guards and that therefore the prison administration was involved in the escape overlook an important consideration.

In 1962 and 1963 the warden of the prison was E. V. Nash, and the director of the department of corrections was Col. James Carter. Nash committed suicide, and Carter resigned following the prison scandals of 1964 (those scandals resulted after disclosures of gambling, drug dealing and murders behind the walls).

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See RAY on Page 10

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

Kansas City Star

Date: 5/3/76

Edition:

Author: J.J. Maloney

Editor:

Title: Inmate Describes Ray's Escape

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

44-760-1311

SEARCHED INDEXED  
SERIALIZED FILED

MAY 4 1976

FBI - KANSAS CITY



# ★ Ray Escaped From State Prison in a Box

Continued from Page 1

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5/3/76

AIRTEL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)  
ATTN: DIVISION 4, SA TOM WEISMAN

FROM: SAC, KANSAS CITY (44-760) C

MURKIN -  
HAROLD WEISBURG vs.  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
USDC, D. C., CIVIL ACTION #751996

Re Kansas City letter to Bureau 4/19/68 entitled  
"MURKIN."

The photograph referred to in relet was taken at the Jackson County Sheriff's Office Jail, Kansas City, Missouri, on 3/28/55. According to the FBI Identification Record for JAMES EARL RAY, FBI #405 942G, fingerprints were submitted by the SO, Kansas City, Missouri, on 3/28/55 and this was the same day RAY was photographed when placed in the Jackson County Jail. The arrest was for forgery of U.S. postal money order. The FBI Identification Record for WALTER TERRY RIFE, FBI #4 558 766, reflects RIFE's fingerprints were submitted by the SO, Kansas City, Missouri, 3/28/55 for forged U.S. postal money order.

A negative of RAY and RIFE being photographed together was obtained by SA RAYMOND B. HOWE and the negative actually reflects not only the photograph of RAY and RIFE, but also an extensive area of the Jackson County SO records section. The photograph when sent to Bureau and Memphis was trimmed so only the two individuals appear on the photograph. The negative is being retained by Kansas City Office.

2 Bureau  
① Kansas City  
RBH:jrt  
(3)

*RBH*  
*jt*  
*js*

44-760-13 4/6

*Th*  
*ll*

Reviews of files furnished by Mr. GEORGE M. CAMP are summarized as follows:

Re: JAMES EARL RAY  
Missouri Department of Corrections #00416

RAY was received at the MSP on 3/17/60, and he escaped from the MSP on 4/23/67. His cell assignments at the MSP were as follows:

4/12/60, Cell 24, "B" Hall (B-24);

7/28/60, K-178;

3/13/61, K-118;

11/22/61, Segregation, 6 months;

5/25/62, B-16;

10/22/65, K-2;

6/8/62, E-Hall Segregation;

12/16/65, K-10;

7/23/62, K-15;

3/4/66, J-42;

8/10/62, K-161;

3/14/66, Maximum security;

8/15/62, K-168;

11/17/66, C-17;

3/8/63, K-172;

1/18/67, K-135

During the seven years, one month and six days RAY was confined in the MSP, he occupied a 2-man cell on only three different occasions, for a total of only six months, the last time being 11/17/66 - 1/18/67, and the previous time being 5/25/62 - 6/8/62 and 4/12/60 - 7/28/60.

RAY had served in the U. S. Army from 2/19/46 until 12/23/48, and his discharge was due to "inaptness and lack of adaptability for military service." He had foreign service from 7/18/46 until 12/21/48. His Army Serial Number was 16163129.

Following his discharge from the Army, he was arrested in Los Angeles, California, on 10/11/49, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department #B-119908 and Los Angeles Police Department #139648.

44-760-1347

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FBI - NEW YORK	

88

The ledger for RAY's financial account at the MSP revealed a modest, active account, with no balance over \$95.00 (highest being 5/23/63) and no deposit over \$65.00 (4/16/63). The card reveals the purchase of a radio from the canteen on 4/21/67.

RAY attempted to escape over the MSP walls on 11/6/61. He hid out in the MSP from 3/11/66 to 3/12/66 in another apparent escape attempt. As of 5/65, he was listed as weighing 153 pounds, standing 5'11" tall. The length of his foot was listed as 12 inches.

When he was apprehended inside the MSP walls, where he had been hiding, on 3/13/66, RAY was found to have three \$1.00 bills and 15¢ in change on his person, along with a plastic bag with an assortment of pills. A report dated 3/15/66 regarding the pills found on RAY indicated he had one 10-mg. capsule of Librium (described as a tranquilizer); four white tablets believed to be ~~Empiri~~ Empirims (described as a common headache and anti-pyretic medication); two circular, red-colored tablets, believed to be Spirine, 50-mg (a tranquilizer); four greenish tablets, believed to be Mellaril, 100-mg (a tranquilizer); and the remnant of a capsule, believed to be a 10-mg. Librium capsule.

In 6/65, RAY was written-up for concealing contraband on a food cart he was taking from the main kitchen to the MSP Hospital, discovered by a guard checking the cart.

RAY was a "bread room man" in the MSP main kitchen, or working in the bakery, from 1962-65. He had various other assignments, and was reassigned to food service on 1/12/67. On his work and training report dated 4/1/67, by Food Supervisor EDWARD PAULTON, RAY was described as a "bread slicer" and as "doing a wonderful job." He was assigned in this job also on the date of his escape, 4/23/67.



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The file on RAY contained the following reports related to his escape on 4/23/67:

DONALD W. WYRICK, now Warden, reported 6/19/68 that inmate RONALD WESTBURG, #71859, told him that inmate DONALD RAY JOHNSON, #10987, had helped RAY in his escape, covering him with bread after RAY had hidden in a bread box. This memo also had a notation on it that this information had been given to the FBI.

BERNARD PESCHANG, cook, MSP, Renz Farm, had noted when the bread arrived on the bread truck from the MSP at the Renz Farm on 4/23/67, it was "all broken up and unfit for human consumption." This fact was noted in the reprimand PESCHANG received dated 5/10/67 from then warden H. R. SWENSON.

SWENSON also reprimanded the guard who drove the bread truck out of the MSP on 4/23/67. This guard, ALFRED BURKHARDT, was cited for failing to check the loading of the bread and to verify the number of loaves loaded was the number on the bread order, and for failing to report the bread's being broken up when it arrived at the Renz Farm. This reprimand was dated 5/10/67.

Guard EZRA SHELTON was reprimanded by SWENSON on 5/10/67, as he had noted the bread box was filled, and it should have been only 2/3 full, as the bread order was for 40 loaves, and it took 60 loaves to completely fill the box.

Guard Officer HAROLD SCHAEFER was reprimanded by SWENSON on 5/10/67 for failing to report RAY missing and/not reporting to his <sup>RAY's</sup> work assignment at the proper time.

The reports indicate the Renz Farm bread truck went out the "Sally Port" at 8:16 a.m., and Guard Officer JOHNNIE PETREE said that he let inmate RAY out of the kitchen gate at approximately this time.

PETREE said RAY was ~~xx~~ in the kitchen eating breakfast sometime between 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. After eating, RAY sliced some bread, one of his duties for the day, and left the kitchen, supposedly for the recreation yard. PETREE reported he last saw RAY going out the kitchen as "Mainline" (larger part of the MSP inmates eating a meal at one time) was going out to the yard, and he assumed RAY was on the yard when RAY did not report for work at 11:00 a.m., and he did not report RAY's absence to his relief officer, HAROLD SCHAFFER when PETREE went off at noon.

Officer SCHAFFER did not check further, though he missed RAY, as he found out RAY had been in the kitchen in the morning and had his work done, and it was customary to allow yard to inmates when their work was finished.

It was 3:25 p.m., Sunday, 4/23/67, when Lt. WILLIAM R. TURNER in the MSP was advised (not shown by whom) that there had been an escape from the MSP. He was told if security was not alerted, there would be another (escape). It was then learned that RAY, assigned to the main kitchen, 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. shift, had not reported for work at 11:00 a.m., and was missing from the 5:00 p.m. count.

A search of the grounds and inspection of the walls from both inside and out was conducted without any results. It was assumed, and still was as of 4/24/67 that RAY was either concealed somewhere inside the walls at the MSP or had escaped without leaving any visible signs as to the mechanics of the escape.

Further~~xx~~ reports showed that the Renz Farm truck came through the "Sally Port" at the MSP at approximately 8:00 a.m., 4/23/67, to pick up the bread for the Renz Farm from the MSP kitchen/bakery. The truck came back through the "Sally Port" going out at approximately 8:16 a.m. The

truck stopped once enroute Renz Farm for another delivery of bread, in a separate box, at the residence of CARL MILLS (not further identified). Inmate LLOYD R. RENO, #10970, rode in the cab of <sup>the</sup> truck with the truck driver, ALFRED BURKHARDT. RENO got in the back of the truck and handed MILLS' box to BURKHARDT, and BURKHARDT delivered the box. The truck then proceeded on to the Renz Farm, and it is documented that the bread in the Renz Farm bread box was found to be "all broken up" when it was delivered to the Renz Farm, on 4/23/67.

RAY had been scheduled for an appearance at a hearing on a writ at the Missouri Supreme Court on 4/26/67, as he had received special permission to be present ~~at~~ for the arguments in that matter. RAY had previously been out to the Cole County Circuit Court on escape charges, etc., on 4/14/66, 8/9/66, 7/12/66, 9/6/66, 11/21/66, 1/16/67 and 2/20/67. He had been out to State Hospital #1, Fulton, <sup>for evaluation</sup> on 9/8/66 until returned to the MSP on 10/21/66. He was also out to the U. S. District Court in Jefferson City on 9/6/63.

The wanted poster prepared at the MSP for RAY as an "Escaped Convict" was received at the MSP records office on 5/17/67 from the print shop, and the print shop had apparently inadvertently placed fingerprints of inmate CHARLES GENE EASLEY on RAY's wanted poster. EASLEY had escaped on 5/7/67. By letter of 11/30/67, the MSP advised the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, that they were sending the "final copy" of the escape notice on RAY, since the fingerprints on the original notice were not RAY's, and that Police Department had apparently not received a previous change correcting the error. The original wanted poster gave RAY's FBI # as 306 443 A, apparently taken from a Missouri State Highway Patrol transcript of arrest record received after RAY arrived at the MSP, while the FBI identification record in file shows RAY's

FBI #405 942 G. The MSP Records Office sent a letter to the U. S. Attorney for the Western District of Missouri on 6/8/67, requesting (UFAC). federal process on RAY for Unlawful Flight to Avoid Confinement. On 6/19/67, the U. S. Attorney, F. RUSSELL MILLIN, authorized UFAC process be issued on RAY.

On 4/22/68, ORLAN ROSE, #73723, inmate at the MSP, wrote a suggested newspaper article he thought might induce RAY to surrender himself if it could be printed.

At about 2:00 a.m., 5/3/68, Sgt. K. BEMBERGER at the MSP Control Center, according to a memo submitted by BEMBERGER, received a telephone call from a man identifying himself as GERALD BUSH from Birmingham. He wanted to know if we had an inmate here by name of JOSEPH AUSTIN. He said that this JOSEPH AUSTIN was an associate of JAMES RAY who was here." BEMBERGER indicated "GERALD BUSH" would not further identify himself, and that he told BUSH he would have to call back during regular business hours when the records office was open, and gave him no information.

A note in the file from Warden SWENSON indicated that GEORGE JONES, #05516, BOBBY POWELL, #13174 and GARY HARKINS, #04870, allegedly knew of RAY's escape in bread delivery to Renz Farm.

RE: DONALD RAY JOHNSON  
Missouri Department of Corrections #10987

JOHNSON was received at the MSP on 10/5/65, and he is a white male, born [redacted] His home was West Plains, Mo., and he was paroled from the MSP on 8/9/66, spending most of his time in Kansas City, Mo., until he was returned to the MSP as a parole violator on 2/8/67 from Clay County, Missouri. He was previously committed to the Missouri Training School for Boys, Boonville, Mo., then was received at the Missouri Intermediate

Reformatory on 3/9/60 but escaped on 6/30/60 from that institution by stealing a dump truck. He was received at the MSP on 2/19/64 from Howell County, <sup>added</sup> ~~begin~~ a two-years sentence for escape, and started a 15-year sentence for armed robbery from Clay County on 2/8/67. He was in cell K-134 and assigned to food service as of 3/6/67. He had also worked in the bakery and bread crew in the MSP in 1962, and his "Work and Training Report" dated 4/1/67 indicated he was a "bread slicer" in the main kitchen at the MSP. He also worked on the 5th floor of the MSP Hospital, 10/20/65 - 4/28/66. He was still assigned in the main kitchen as a "bread room man" on 7/1/67.

JOHNSON and his brother, JOE KENNETH JOHNSON, were said by the Sheriff of Clay County to have been overheard to say they would escape and would hurt anyone who got in their way. They had taken part in an armed robbery in Clay County. JOE was also sentenced to the MSP, and on 11/20/67, DONALD JOHNSON requested a cell change from K-134 to J-115, next to his brother's cell. This move was approved, 12/5/67. DONALD had requested job changes, to the Power Plant, on 8/28/67 and to the Soap Plant, 9/28/67.

DONALD JOHNSON was paroled from the MSP on 6/3/74, and he had had a home offer then with a friend, ALBERT S. TIMBROOK, 245 Brent, Dumas, Arkansas, and employment at McGraw-Edison in Dumas. His brother, JOE KENNETH JOHNSON, # 23500, was in the MSP in 4/73, on a 10-year sentence. He listed the following relatives and friends:

Father, EVERETT JOHNSON, 919 S. ~~Johnson~~ Walker, West Plains, Mo.;  
Brother, JAMES JOHNSON, 913 E. Dale, Springfield, Mo.;  
Sisters, Mrs. MELVIN ROUSEY or ROUSSY, 631 Chestnut, Springfield and  
          BONNIE ROWLETT, 509 N. Walnut, Willow Springs, Mo.  
Girlfriend, CLARICE WELTY, 920 S. Walker, West Plains, Mo.

There was nothing in his file which shows any specific contact with RAY, though it is noted RAY was in cell K-135 as of 1/18/67, and both were



employed in the kitchen as "bread slicers."

RE: GARY WAYNE HARKINS  
Missouri Department of Corrections #21231 and 04870

HARKINS was received at the MSP on 5/18/62 and served a ten-year sentence for burglary and stealing under MSP #04870 until discharged on 7/7/67. He was returned to the MSP on 10/19/71 on a 25-years sentence from Butler County for armed robbery, involving a bank robbery, and he remains confined on that sentence with MSP #21231. He is a white male, /  
born [redacted]

He had been received at the Missouri Intermediate Reformatory on 7/3/57 on a 5 years sentence for burglary and stealing, and he escaped on 1/12/59, returned on 1/20/59. He escaped on 9/25/60 from the State Hospital at Fulton, Mo., was returned on 9/28/60 and discharged from the MSP on 3/20/61. He previously had been committed in 1955 to the Missouri Training School for Boys at Boonville.

After his release from the MSP on 7/7/67, it is indicated that he went to St. Louis, Mo., lived alone for a while then was married.

HARKINS' co-defendants in the bank robbery case, ROBERT POWELL, #16960, was paroled to a federal detainer on 7/7/75, and FRED LEON KIMBIE, #16771, was paroled on 6/30/75. HARKINS had been found incompetent to stand trial in the U. S. District Court at Memphis, Tenn., in 1969, on a different bank robbery charge. HARKINS had escaped three times from the jail at Farmington, Missouri.

There is no information in his file showing any specific contact he had with JAMES EARL RAY.

RE: RAYMOND CURTIS

Missouri Department of Corrections #04849

from the Renz Farm

CURTIS was received at the MSP on 5/15/62. He escaped/on 7/16/64 and was returned on 7/19/64. He was paroled on 6/27/66, and the records in the MSP show that he was received at the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Center, Jackson, Georgia, on 3/12/69, to serve a life sentence for murder, their #A-73862. He is a white male, born [ ] at Dalton, Ga. CURTIS served in the U. S. Army, 1944-47, receiving a Dishonorable Discharge, and he spent time in the U. S. Penitentiary on a 1962 bank robbery conviction. He was written up in the MSP on 9/23/65 for "running a store."

CURTIS's file contains no information showing any specific contact with JAMES EARL RAY.

RE: BILLY MAC MILES

Missouri Department of Corrections #07206

MILES was received at the MSP on 8/16/63; paroled 9/29/64 and returned as a parole violator on 5/31/66. He was discharged from the MSP on 1/20/67. His file contains no information showing any specific contact with RAY.

RE: JAMES RICHARD ESSON

Missouri Department of Corrections #73789

ESSON was received at the MSP on 4/28/58 on a robbery sentence and was released on 8/1/72, described as an "ideal inmate." He was picked up on his release by the London, Ohio, Correctional Authorities for extradition back to Ohio for completion of a life sentence. His file contains no information showing any specific contact with RAY.

RE: ROBERT LYNN POWELL,  
Missouri Department of Corrections #16960

POWELL was received at the MSP on 5/14/69 on a 25-years sentence for armed robbery from Stoddard County, and he was paroled on 7/7/75 to a federal sentence and as of 7/17/75 was at the U. S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas under #88777-132. He is a white male, born .

He had previously been received at the MSP on 1/16/67 on a two years sentence for burglary and stealing, which he served under #13174, and he was discharged from that sentence on 2/1/68, when he went to St. Louis, Mo., and lived with a girlfriend for several weeks. He was using aliases of JACK BYRON PORTER on 8/5/68 and 8/8/68 when arrested by the Sheriff's Office at Everett, Washington. He was also using aliases and secured identification papers in other names when a fugitive in 2/65, and he declined to identify where he got his papers after being apprehended.

POWELL was involved in a bank robbery at Puxico, Mo., on 9/3/68, with FRED LEON KIMBLE and GARY WAYNE HARKINS. On 1/17/69, he escaped from the Sheriff in Stoddard County, Mo., and was later apprehended in Alabama.

On 2/15/67, POWELL was assigned to food service in the MSP and was in cell K-118. As of 3/9/67, he was in cell K-31. He had a GEORGE KELLEY, 2486 Almougus Dr., Niles, Michigan, on his visitors/mail list and KELLEY had served time in the MSP, 1963-65.

POWELL's file contained no specific indication of contact with RAY, other than work and hall assignments.

RE: GEORGE HAROLD JONES  
Missouri Department of Corrections #05516

JONES served time in the Missouri Intermediate Reformatory on a transfer from the Missouri Training School for Boys at Boonville from 4/1/53 until 3/27/54, when he was paroled. He was returned to the reformatory on 12/20/57, escaped 5/22/58, and returned to the MSP on 5/23/58 and assigned MSP# 73948. He was paroled on 11/3/60, returned as a parole violator on 8/25/61 and discharged on 9/26/62, to begin a new sentence under #05516. He escaped on 9/23/64 while assigned to the MTCM, was apprehended 10/27/64, did time in the State Penitentiary at Nashville, Tennessee, ~~following~~ before being returned to the MSP, <sup>6/28/66,</sup> and was discharged on 9/8/69. He was received at the U. S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, ~~in~~ in 11/71, #86919-132.

JONES was assigned to food service, celled in K-142, as of 7/8/66, at the MSP. As of 4/7/67, he was assigned to food service, having previously been in the furniture factory and in cell F-100 as of 1/9/67. He requested assignment to cell K-34 on 5/15/67, since K-hall was the hall for food service workers. He was on the bread crew in the bakery as of 1/1/67, and previously had worked there in 1961-62. He was head baker in the main kitchen at the MSP 7/68 and 1/1/69, and was described as the "assistant head baker for several months" in report of 7/1/67.

JONES was issued size "9 III" shoes on 7/26/66 in clothing issue at the MSP. JONES's foot was listed as 11 inches long. He was issued size \$\$\$ "10 III" shoes on 2/2/67 and again on 6/9/67. He was issued size 34 walking shorts and one pair socks, 4/17/67.

JONES's file shows a report regarding an incident on 12/16/68 when EARL PRATTE, Cook II, was found to be carrying a sealed letter from JONES to a Mr. and Mrs. SEWELL, 7401 Wise Ave., Richmond Heights, Missouri, which JONES wanted PRATTE to ~~mail~~ mail for him outside the MSP.

PRATTE admitted also that JONES had also offered PRATTE \$100 to bring drugs into the MSP for JONES.

JONES was involved in a drug possession charge in the MSP in 1966, when he was found to be in possession of some 100-mg. Mellaril tablets and a hypodermic needle.

JONES listed relatives as follows:

Wife, Mrs. LINDA JONES, 2338 So. 9th St., St. Louis, Mo., or  
Rt. 1, Cedar Hills, Mo.;  
Sister, JEAN JONES, 110 Public Sq., Nashville, Tenn., 1966;  
Step-mother, BERTHA JONES, Rt. 1, Box 358, Hillsboro, Mo.  
No specific contact with JAMES EARL RAY was mentioned in JONES's file.  
RE: CARL B. DRAKE,  
Missouri Department of Corrections #00189

DRAKE was received at the MSP on 2/5/60 from St. Louis City and discharged on 6/1/65. He had no kitchen or bakery assignments listed after 1960. His wife, BETTY DRAKE, resided at 1308 Mill St., Poplar Bluff, Mo., with his mother-in-law, LELA PIA CE.

His file contained no specific reference to contact with JAMES EARL RAY.

RE: JOSEPH SEIBERT  
Missouri Department of Corrections #09111

SEIBERT was received at the MSP on 10/2/64 from Jackson County, for murder. He escaped from the Jackson County Jail in Kansas City on 10/31/67 while out on a writ. He later was apprehended in Oklahoma and later escaped from the Oklahoma State Penitentiary. He was then arrested in Tennessee and was sentenced to 25 years sentence for bank robbery in U. S. District Court, Western District of Tennessee, to commence 10/24/75 and serve with the state time on his return to the MSP on 11/14/75.

SEIBERT had attempted to escape 3/11/66, when he hid out in a television room, on the same date when JAMES EARL RAY hid out in the MSP. Both had placed a "dummy" made of bedding under the blankets of their bunks in that apparent escape attempt. SEIBERT attempted an escape

again on 11/3/66, when he used a hand-made ladder, and on 8/27/65, he threw a fire bomb at a tower at the wall in an escape attempt.

SEIBERT worked on the bread crew in food service in the main kitchen at the MSP as of 7/1/65.

He was sent to maximum security for his escape attempt on 11/3/66, but as of 5/31/67, he was back in food service in the MSP, celling in K-60.

There were no other specific references involving JAMES EARL RAY in SEIBERT's file.

RE: RONALD WESTBERG  
Missouri Department of Corrections #71859

WESTBERG was received at the MSP on 12/27/56 from Laclede County on a 25 years sentence for Assault With Intent to Kill with Malice. He had additional sentences imposed later in actions in Cole County involving violence to a guard and murdering another inmate at the MSP.

WESTBERG hanged himself in his cell at the MSP on 11/2/70, and his death was ruled a suicide by the coroner.

WESTBERG had attempted escape from the MSP, one occasion involving the use of a homemade pistol on 9/19/59. He had an accomplice then, and this inmate, ROLLIE LASTER, #02059, remained a close associate in the MSP of WESTBERG. ALVIN WRIGHT, #17755, close friend of WESTBERG, was attacked by two Negro inmates in the MSP, and MSP officials thought that WESTBERG would retaliate against these <sup>Negro</sup> inmates since he was a close friend of WRIGHT. The psychological profiles regarding WESTBERG included information of hostile reaction toward unnamed persons for their "racial profanity" toward his mother. His file contains information regarding self-inflicted wounds, his potential suicide-prone outlook and homosexual involvement with other inmates. He killed inmate FRED HARLING, #08921, on 5/6/69 and on the same date gave a knife to inmate DELVIN LOUTHAIN, #14743,

"for protection from the Negroes." WESTBERG had trouble with HARLING over HARLING's attention to LOUTHAIN. Major DANTON STEELE had a memo in WESTBERG's file identifying him as of 1/17/66 with an "escape-minded" clique at the MSP.

WESTBERG was in the main kitchen in 1964-65 at the MSP, but there was no specific reference in the file to any direct contact with JAMES EARL RAY, otherwise.

The personnel files for the personnel at the MSP, mentioned in Mr. CAMP's memorandum, were reviewed, and no significant information was noted other than the reprimands previously noted with regard to RAY's escape. The file on ALFRED BURKHARDT, Guard Officer, who resigned from the Department of Corrections on 12/10/67, had been destroyed, as had the file on HAROLD JOHN SCHAFER.

It was noted that the personnel file of EZRA LEROY SHELLEN, Correctional Officer I, had a notation from Warden SJENSON to the effect that SHELLEN's next pay increase should be withheld based on reprimands for the 4/23/67 escape of RAY and the 8/12/67 escape of inmate SAMMY NORBERT REESE, #69652, who was thought to have escaped in the trash truck which went through the "Sally Port" while SHELLEN was on duty, just as he had been on duty and failed to check the bread on the Renz Farm truck in the 4/23/67 escape of RAY.

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Kansas City, Missouri

May 7, 1976

ASSASSINATION OF  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
CIVIL RIGHTS

On April 29, 1976, Mr. George M. Camp, Deputy Director, Missouri Department of Social Services, Jefferson City, Missouri, was contacted and receipt of his letter of April 13, 1976 to FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley was acknowledged. This letter reads as follows:

"Dear Mr. Kelley:

"It is our understanding that the Attorney General has under consideration a review of the events that led up to the death of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. Either as part of that review, or as an independent review, we request that you initiate an investigation into the activities of James Earl Ray while he was an inmate at the Missouri State Penitentiary in the early and mid-1960's, including his escape from that institution in 1976.

"Recently we reviewed the facts available to us and concluded that James Earl Ray's escape did not involve the complicity of Missouri prison officials and that he was not a "merchant" within the Penitentiary. However, the State of Missouri has neither the resources nor the legal authority to conduct an investigation that could lead to a review of facts and interviews outside the State of Missouri. As part of your investigation, we ask that you review the material in our possession. We, of course, do not have access to the material and information that your agency and the U. S. Attorney's Office developed in the course of the investigation and the prosecution of James Earl Ray, and therefore think that your office is in the best position to be absolutely sure that no stone has been left unturned.

- 6 - Bureau
- 1 - Memphis (44-1987) (Info)
- 1 - USA, Kansas City, Missouri
- 1 - Kansas City (44-760)

THW:jb

(9)

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.

44-760-1348

ASSASSINATION OF  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

"We stand ready to assist and cooperate with you and look forward to hearing from you as soon as you have made a decision on the course of action you wish to take.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE M. CAMP  
Deputy Director

Mr. Camp stated that he is in charge of the Division of Corrections of the Missouri Department of Social Services, and handling of the captioned matter insofar as his agency is concerned has been delegated to him by Mr. Lawrence L. Graham, Director of the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Camp advised that he and his staff reviewed files and conducted interviews of available appropriate personnel, and former personnel of the Missouri State Penitentiary (MSP), and some inmates of the MSP regarding James Earl Ray and his escape from the MSP, and regarding the murder of Dr. King.

Mr. Camp stated that after these inquiries and file reviews, it was the conclusion of Missouri officials that Ray's escape from the MSP was due to the laxity of some employees, and Ray took advantage of the laxity. He said he found no evidence of a conspiracy to aid Ray's escape involving MSP personnel.

Mr. Camp said that in regard to allegations that Ray was running rackets in the MSP, financing himself through illegal acts within the MSP, supposedly aided by unidentified guard personnel, it was the conclusion after the study that such activity was not indicated by facts available, and no evidence was found to support such allegations. He noted that Ray had only one misconduct report, other than write-ups regarding his escape attempts, and that was an incident involving Ray's apparent attempt to take contraband into the hospital at the MSP on a food cart. He further noted that a review of Ray's ledger account, which shows the activity of the money coming into and disbursed from his account at the MSP treasurer's office, revealed the total

**ASSASSINATION OF  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

amount of money that came into his account during the time he was at the MSP, 1960-67, was about \$900. He noted that some of Ray's earnings from working in prison jobs and money sent by family went back out to family, and the rest was spent in the MSP commissary and for reading material.

Mr. Camp noted that the MSP official who was deemed most knowledgeable regarding the inmate population at the MSP during the period of time of 1960-67, and who was in a position to know, and did know which inmates were involved in rackets as a merchant or dealer in contraband, and possessed of influence over inmate population in the MSP, was Major B. J. Poiry. He said information from Major Poiry was to the effect that Ray was a "nobody" and was distinguished by nothing except that "he wanted to escape from the MSP."

Mr. Camp advised that nothing was seen in all his investigation to relate Ray's escape to the murder of Martin L. King. He noted no information indicating that Ray was a racist.

Mr. Camp stated that the MSP staff should have been watching Ray more closely in view of his previous escape attempts at the MSP. He believes that the prison officials' decision to cancel a suggestion that the employees identified as lax in their duties, which probably led to Ray being able to escape, in addition to the letters of reprimand they did receive, was an insufficiency of management in not taking more severe administrative action against those employees. He noted, however, that at the time of the escape, it could not have been known that Ray later would kill King.

Mr. Camp said that the "Western Union Mailgram" received by Missouri Governor Christopher S. Bond at Jefferson City on February 6, 1976 from Reverend Emanuel Cleaver, Executive Director, Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), referred to the January 26, 1976 issue of Time magazine and requested investigation regarding Ray's escape and activities in the MSP. He believes the SCLC hypothesized that the MSP staff helped Ray run rackets in the MSP to finance himself on his escape in a plot to kill King.

He noted that the Time magazine article was arranged by the publicity agent for George McMillan, 12 Hilliard Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts, to help promote his book on Ray,

**ASSASSINATION OF  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

and King's assassination. He said that it was his understanding that McMillian had stated that he had refused to give any assistance to the FBI when contacted for information he might have regarding the allegations mentioned above.

McMillian used as a source a former MSP inmate named Raymond Curtis according to Mr. Camp, who noted that Curtis had been gone from the MSP about one year before Ray escaped.

Mr. Camp further advised that he had received a letter dated January 28, 1976 from Lou Miller, former MSP inmate, who told Camp that he had been editor of the inmate newspaper at the MSP, the Jefftown Journal, when Ray was in the MSP. Miller stated that he knew Ray and "ran a card game with him" for a period of time not specified in the MSP. Miller is now residing at the Kirby Hotel, 233 North Main, Springfield, Missouri, according to Mr. Camp.

Mr. Camp pointed out that his investigation in this matter did not include interviews with Miller or Curtis, nor did he interview Fred Wilkinson, Director of the Department of Corrections in 1967, who now lives in North Carolina. He said that he believes that any further investigation in this matter should include interviews with the above-named persons, as well as the MSP personnel reprimanded in this matter at the time, Major Poiry, former MSP Warden H. R. Swenson and with James Earl Ray.

Mr. Camp furnished copies of the following items from his file on this matter, which are attached to this memorandum:

"Mailgram" to Governor Bond from Reverend Emanuel Cleaver, supra, February 5, 1976;

Letter dated January 28, 1976 to Ms. Heather Kilpatrick, Time-Life Building, New York City, New York, from Mr. Camp;

Letter dated February 26, 1976 to Reverend Cleaver, supra, from Mr. Camp;

Memorandum dated February 27, 1976 to James Earl Ray file from Mr. Camp.

**ASSASSINATION OF  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

The material utilized by Mr. Camp in his investigation, as outlined in his memorandum dated February 27, 1976, was reviewed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation at Mr. Camp's Office on April 29 and April 30, 1976 and May 3 and May 4, 1976. This review revealed no information pertinent to this investigation which has not already been available, or in variance with the conclusions reached by Mr. Camp, as outlined above.

5/10/76

AIRTEL

AIR MAIL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)  
FROM: SAC, KANSAS CITY (44-760) RUC  
RE: MURKIN

Re Kansas City airtel and LHM, 5/7/76.

Enclosed for the Bureau are six copies and Memphis one copy of LHM, containing enclosures described on page four of referenced LHM, dated 5/7/76.

2-Bureau (Enc. 6)  
1-Memphis (44-1987)(Enc. 1)(Info.)  
①-Kansas City  
JRG:aa  
(4)

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_

44-760-1349

Kansas City, Missouri  
May 10, 1976

ASSASSINATION OF  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
CIVIL RIGHTS

Reference memorandum dated May 7, 1976.

Attached are the enclosures described on  
page four of referenced memorandum.

6-Bureau  
1-Memphis (44-1987)(Info.)  
1-USA, Kansas City, Mo.  
1-KC 44-760)  
JRG:aa  
(9)

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized CP  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed CP

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the  
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44-760-1350



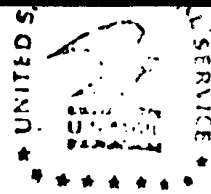
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2-000904E036 02/05/76

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western union Mailgram



GOVERNOR CHRISTOPHER S BOND  
STATE CAPITOL  
JEFFERSON CITY MO 65101

FEB 6 1976

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

DEAR GOVERNOR BOND

IN ITS JANUARY 26 ADDITION, TIME MAGAZINE CARRIED SOME KEY EXCERPTS FROM GEORGE MCMILLIAN'S UPCOMING BOOK ON THE ASSASSINATION OF DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR, THE FOUNDER OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IN HIS BOOK, MCMILLIAN CHARGES THAT JAMES EARL RAY, DOCTOR KING'S ALLEGED ASSASSIN, PLOTTED AND FINANCED THE MURDER OF THE FAMED CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER BEHIND THE WALLS OF THE MISSOURI STATE PRISON. MCMILLIAN, WHO SPENT 7 YEARS RESEARCHING FOR HIS BOOK, GOES EVEN FURTHER BY SUGGESTING THAT SEVERAL PRISON GUARDS PROVIDED RAY WITH WHATEVER ASSISTANCE WAS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN A LUCRATIVE PRISON DRUG BUSINESS. MCMILLIAN CLAIMS THAT RAY HAD EARNED OVER 7 THOUSAND DOLLARS BY THE TIME OF HIS ESCAPE AND THAT HE USED THIS MONEY FOR ASSASSINATION PLANS.

WHETHER OR NOT MCMILLIAN'S BOOK IS COMPLETELY RELIABLE IS SECONDARY. THE FACT THAT TIME MAGAZINE, ONE OF THE NATION'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS AND WIDELY CIRCULATED PUBLICATIONS HAD ENOUGH CONFIDENCE IN MCMILLIAN TO PRINT THE STORY, IS IN ITSELF WORTHY OF OUR ATTENTION. SINCE THE REVELATION THAT J EDGAR HOOVER USED THE FBI IN A VICIOUS ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT DOCTOR KING, THE HARRIS POLL REPORTS THAT 60 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION BELIEVE THAT DOCTOR KING'S DEATH WAS THE RESULT OF A CONSPIRACY. THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, AS YOU WELL KNOW, HAS, WITH MUCH JUSTIFICATION, BECOME CYNICAL AND SUSPICIOUS. THE STORY IN TIME HAS FURTHERED THIS CYNICISM AND SUSPICION.

IF, AS MANY HAVE COME TO BELIEVE, DOCTOR KING'S ASSASSINATION WAS CONCEIVED IN JEFFERSON CITY AND CONSUMMATED IN MEMPHIS, A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF RAY'S ILLEGAL DEALINGS AS A PRISON MERCHANT AND HIS SEEMINGLY SMOOTH ESCAPE MIGHT SHED SOME BADLY NEEDED LIGHT ON THIS VERY EMOTIONAL ISSUE.

THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IS THEREFORE MAKING THE FOLLOWING REQUESTS:

1 THAT THE FINDINGS OF THE OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION OF JAMES EARL RAY'S ESCAPE FROM THE MISSOURI STATE PENITENTIARY BE PRESENTED TO SCLC AND MADE PUBLIC.

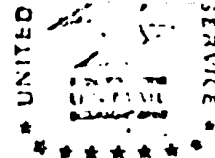
2 THAT THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE EXAMINE THE CHARGES MADE BY MCMILLIAN IN REGARD TO DRUG SALES IN THE PRISON AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT PRISON GUARDS MAY HAVE AIDED RAY IN HIS ESCAPE.

3 THAT THERE BE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF ANY ACTIONS TAKEN BY PRISON OFFICIALS OR GOVERNOR WARREN HEARNES AFTER THEY LEARNED THAT DOCTOR KING'S ASSASSIN WAS A MISSOURI STATE PRISON ESCAPEE.

SCLC, NEEDLESS TO SAY IS HOPING FOR A POSITIVE AND PROMPT RESPONSE.

western union

Telegram



REVEREND EMANUEL CLEAVER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

00:46 EST

MGMSTLT HSB



STATE OF MISSOURI  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
Jefferson City

GEORGE M. CAMP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

January 28, 1976

Ms. Heather Kilpatrick  
Time-Life Building  
Rockerfeller Center  
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Ms. Kilpatrick:

As head of Missouri's prison system, I was disturbed to read the article on the assassination of Martin Luther King in the Time edition of January 26, 1976.

In one section of this article, you used excerpts from George McMillan's unpublished book to make both inaccurate and misleading implications and statements concerning Missouri's corrections system. Concerning James Earl Ray's confinement in the Missouri State Penitentiary, you stated that prison authorities were not helpful in documenting Ray's illegal dealings as a "Merchant." You also stated, "Just the opposite. They can no more admit that they have lost control of the prison, that the prisoners are running it, than they can fly to the moon."

Nothing could be further from the truth than these statements. First of all, Missouri's correctional system has a complete open door press policy allowing complete access to the press at any time except in emergency situations. And I feel that if you were to visit any of our correctional facilities in Missouri, you would learn that we most certainly have not lost control of our institutions. Secondly, the staff here have cooperated completely with Mr. McMillan in obtaining information and most, if not all, information on Ray's confinement in Missouri came from our officials. In addition to this, I was never contacted by Mr. McMillan concerning this situation. Lastly and most importantly, your article referred to conditions of the Missouri State Penitentiary in the early 1960's, but as seen from the above quote from Time, the reader would be led

Ms. Heather Kilpatrick

-2-

January 28, 1976

to believe that these same conditions exist today and they, of course, do not.

I find this assessment most difficult to comprehend especially in view of the fact that to my knowledge neither Mr. McMillan nor the staff from Time Magazine ever came to Missouri since my arrival here in July of 1973 to personally review the situation.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE M. CAMP  
Director of Correctional Services  
State of Missouri

GMC:ljr

cc: George McMillan  
Ned Bradford