

U. S. Department of Justice

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

ENTIRE FILE REVIEWED  
FOR HISTORICAL  
DECLASSIFICATION

FEDERAL BUREAU

of **X** DO NOT DESTROY  
HISTORICAL VALUE  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

INVESTIGATION

Bureau File Number 44. 38861

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 11/30/01 BY SP1 CLK/ltm

See also Nos. Sub A

CLASSIFICATION NO.

44-775

Volume Number  
Serials

678 8 680

Closed Section  
Barbara F.S. 68

SHAW-WALKER 18-32850

44.

7

7

5

Val

8

Res.

678

680

FD - 245 (REV. 4-13-60)

**U. S. Department of Justice**

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

CLASSIFICATION NO

15

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE <b>MEMPHIS</b>	OFFICE OF ORIGIN <b>MEMPHIS</b>	DATE <b>4/30/68</b>	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD <b>4/4-30/68</b>
TITLE OF CASE <b>CHANGED</b> <b>JAMES EARL RAY, aka</b> <b>Eric Starvo Galt,</b> <b>W. C. Herron,</b> <b>Harvey Lowmyer,</b> <b>James McBride,</b> <b>James O'Conner,</b> <b>James Walton,</b> <b>James Walyon,</b> <b>John Willard,</b> <b>Jim - FUGITIVE</b> <b>IO # 4182,</b> <b>WF # 442-A;</b> <b>Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM</b>		REPORT MADE BY <b>SA JOE C. HESTER</b>	TYPED BY <b>WP</b>
		CHARACTER OF CASE  <b>CR - CONSPIRACY;</b> <b>UFAC - ROBBERY</b>	

Title marked changed to reflect the subject's true name of JAMES EARL RAY and to reflect additional aliases of the subject.

## REFERENCE

Report of SA JOE C. HESTER dated 4/17/68 at Memphis.

-P-

## ENCLOSURES

### TO CHICAGO AND KANSAS CITY:

One copy of referenced report.

APPROVED <i>[Signature]</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE COPIES MADE: 5-Bureau (44-38861) 3-Atlanta (44-2386) 3-Birmingham (44-1740) 3-Chicago (Enc. 1) (44-1114) 1-Jackson 3-Kansas City (44-760) (Enc. 1) 3-Los Angeles (44-1574) 3-Mobile (157-2627) 3-New Orleans 3-St. Louis (44-775) 3-Springfield 5-Memphis (44-1987)	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.2em;">44-775-678</p> <p>SEARCHED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDEXED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SERIALIZED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FILED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">MAY 2 - 1968</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FBI - ST. LOUIS</p> </div>
---	---

ME 44-1987

ADMINISTRATIVE

On April 19, 1968, the Washington Field Office initiated a check of files of the Passport Office, United States Department of State, concerning JAMES EARL RAY, and nothing identifiable with RAY was located. A further check is underway at the Washington National Record Center at Suitland, Maryland, in retired passport files.

In order to cover the possibility that subject RAY may have recently been issued a passport and the record thereof had not been received in Washington, Mr. EDWARD STOKEN, Passport Office, sent a teletype message to all passport agencies. The Passport Office in Honolulu was checked telephonically with negative results. On April 19, 1968, Mr. ROBERT D. JOHNSON, Acting Director, Passport Office, telephonically advised SA KENNETH HASER that all passport agencies had teletyped Washington that their records are negative concerning RAY.

Mr. JOHNSON further advised that he had issued instructions whereby the Duty Officer of the Passport Office was alerted concerning RAY and instructions were made to all passport agencies to refer immediately to the nearest FBI office any information concerning RAY and his intended travel.

B  
COVER PAGE

ME 44-1987

The period of this report precedes the last period date of the last report, as this report contains investigation which for reasons of brevity were not included in the last report.

Leads for other offices continue to be set out by more expeditious means than by report, and it would serve no purpose to list such leads in this report.

It should be noted that in the interviews with persons who were at Jim's Grill, 418 South Main Street, on the night of 4/4/68 at about the time of the murder, they report seeing a white Mustang parked almost in front of Jim's Grill. The owner of this Mustang has not been located and has not voluntarily come forth. It is not believed that this Mustang is pertinent to this investigation and should not be confused with the Mustang that was parked just south of Canipe Amusement Company, 424 South Main Street, in which car it is believed the subject fled from the scene. The crime scene diagram on page 4 of referenced Memphis report indicates the positions, or what is believed to be the approximate positions, of the two white Mustangs as mentioned above.

#### INFORMANTS

All offices have been requested to maintain contact in this matter with criminal, security, and racial informants.

The Memphis Office has maintained contact with informants, none of whom have been able to furnish any positive information regarding the subject or his whereabouts.

#### LEAD

#### MEMPHIS

#### AT MEMPHIS, TENN.

Will continue efforts to locate the subject.

C\*  
COVER PAGE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

## Copy to:

Report of: SA JOE C. HESTER  
Date: April 30, 1968

Office: Memphis

Field Office File No.: ME 44-1987

Bureau File No.: 44-38861

Title: JAMES EARL RAY;  
Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIMCharacter: CIVIL RIGHTS - CONSPIRACY;  
UNLAWFUL FLIGHT TO AVOID CONFINEMENT - ROBBERY

Synopsis: Photographs of subject RAY exhibited to persons at rooming house, 422 1/2 South Main Street, Memphis; to persons at Rebel Motel, Memphis, and to clerk at Oliyer Rexall Drug Store, Whitehaven, Tennessee, without effecting a positive identification. Salesman at York Arms, Memphis, who sold binoculars indicated he could not positively identify 1968 photograph of JAMES EARL RAY as binocular purchaser but believes that photograph is identical with purchaser. Additional interviews with occupants of Lorraine Motel set out, including interviews with Mrs. GEORGIA M. DAVIS and Mrs. LUCRETIA B. WARD, who describe activities immediately prior to murder. Persons who were at Jim's Grill, 418 South Main Street, Memphis, on 4/4/68 interviewed. Information regarding emergency room treatment of victim KING set forth. Information regarding Alabama driver's license and automobile registration in the name of ERIC STARVO GALT set forth. Former manager, Continental Dance Studio, New Orleans, Louisiana, located and unable to recall that subject attended this school in New Orleans. Laboratory findings set forth regarding evidence located at Memphis. Latent fingerprints found on the Remington Model 760 rifle, on the telescopic sight, on the binoculars, on the newspaper, on the after-shave lotion bottle, and on the Schlitz beer can have all been identified with the fingerprints of the subject. HARRY SERO, former jailmate at Missouri State Penitentiary, interviewed. Additional persons who resided Economy Rooming House, 2608 Highland Avenue, Birmingham, located and interviewed, with negative results. Memphis City Engineer measured distance from where shot fired to where victim struck as 207 feet. IN VIEW OF THE CRIME FOR WHICH SUBJECT BEING SOUGHT, HE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND DANGEROUS.

-P-

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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. EXHIBITION OF SUBJECT'S PHOTOGRAPHS . . . . .	4
A. Rooming House, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis . . . . .	4
B. Rebel Motel, Memphis . . . . .	12
C. Oliver Rexall Drug Store, Whitehaven, Tennessee . . . . .	15
D. York Arms Company, 162 South Main Street, Memphis . . . . .	17
II. INTERVIEWS WITH PERSONS AT OR NEAR LORRAINE MOTEL, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE . . . . .	19
A. Mrs. GEORGIA M. DAVIS . . . . .	20
B. Mrs. LUCRETIA B. WARD . . . . .	26
III. INVESTIGATION AT JIM'S GRILL, 418 SOUTH MAIN STREET, MEMPHIS . . . . .	47
IV. MEDICAL INFORMATION RE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING . . . . .	70
A. Emergency Room Summary . . . . .	71
B. Description of Photographs Taken of the Victim . . . . .	74
V. ALABAMA DRIVER'S LICENSE AND AUTOMOBILE REGISTRATION FOR ERIC STARVO GALT . . . . .	75
A. Registration for 1966 Ford Mustang . . . . .	76
B. Driver's License Issued to ERIC STARVO GALT . . . . .	77
VI. INFORMATION CONCERNING CONTINENTAL DANCE STUDIO, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA . . . . .	78



TABLE OF CONTENTS, continued

	<u>Page</u>
VII. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE AND LATENT FINGERPRINTS . .	83
VIII. MISCELLANEOUS . . . . .	111
A. HARRY SERO, Former Jailmate at Missouri State Penitentiary . . . . .	112
B. Persons Who Resided Economy Rooming House, Birmingham, Alabama . . . . .	114
1. LAWRENCE C. HOWELL . . . . .	114
2. Mrs. O. L. BLACK . . . . .	116
3. Mrs. JAMES E. WELDON . . . . .	118
4. THOMAS D. FRANKLIN . . . . .	118
C. MEASUREMENT OF DISTANCE FROM ROOMING HOUSE TO LORRAINE MOTEL BALCONY . . . . .	119

ME 44-1987

DETAILS:

PERSONS AT ROOMING HOUSE,  
422½ SOUTH MAIN STREET,  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date April 25, 1968

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY taken in 1955, 1960, and 1966, and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis on April 4, 1968, were shown to Mr. CHARLIE QUITMAN STEPHENS, Apartment 6B, 422<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. STEPHENS said the 1955 and 1960 photographs of RAY were not familiar to him, but he advised the 1966 profile photograph of RAY appearing in Wanted Flyer 442-A, April 19, 1968, and Identification Order 4182 dated April 20, 1968, looked like the man he saw in Apartment 5B on April 4, 1968, talking to Mrs. BESSIE BREWER. STEPHENS said he only saw the man's profile in the boarding house and as a result could only say the profile photograph of RAY in 1966 looked very much like the above mentioned man in Room 5B.

STEPHENS said he had never seen the bedspread or any similar bedspread either at the rooming house or anywhere else.

5

On 4/24/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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 April 25, 1968

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY taken in 1955, 1960, and 1966, and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis, Tennessee, April 4, 1968, were shown to Mr. WILLIAM CHARLES ANSCHUTZ, Apartment 4B, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. He advised none of the men in the photographs were familiar to him and that he would not be able to identify the man he saw running down the hall on April 4, 1968, in the late afternoon after hearing the noise which he thought was a shot, as the man was covering his face with his arm as he ran down the hall.

---

6

On 4/24/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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 April 25, 1968

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY taken 1955, 1960, and 1966, and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis, April 4, 1968, were shown to Mrs. BESSIE RUTH BREWER, Room No. 2, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. She said she had looked at the bedspread on April 4, 1968, when it was displayed to her after being recovered by the Memphis Police. She said the bedspread did not come from her rooming house and in fact she had never seen one like it before in her life. Mrs. BREWER said none of the men in the photographs shown her were familiar to her. She further advised that she did not believe she would recognize the man using the name JOHN WILLARD if he were to "walk up and say hello to me right now." She said she did not look at the man called WILLARD "squarely in the face" and as a result, does not think she will be able to identify him.

7

On April 24, 1968 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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 April 25, 1968

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY taken in 1955, 1960, and 1966, and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis, Tennessee, April 4, 1968, were shown to Mr. BERTIE L. REEVES, Apartment 3, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee. He advised none of the men in the photographs were familiar to him and that he had never seen the bedspread or any bedspread similar to it.

---

8

On 4/24/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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 April 25, 1968

Mr. FRANK BREWER, Room No. 2, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, advised he never saw the man registered as JOHN WILLARD at the boarding house.

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY taken in 1955, 1960, and 1966, and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis on April 4, 1968, were shown to Mr. BREWER, and he advised none of the men in the photographs were familiar to him. He also stated he had never seen the bedspread or any bedspread similar to it.

---

9

On 4/24/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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 April 25, 1968

Mrs. CHARLIE STEPHENS, Apartment 6B, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, advised she never saw the man registered into Room 5B on April 4, 1968, as she was sick in bed that entire week.

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY taken in 1955, 1960, and 1966, and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis on April 4, 1968, were shown to Mrs. STEPHENS, and she advised none of the men in the photographs were familiar to her. She also stated she had never seen the bedspread or any bedspread similar to it before.

10

On 4/24/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987  
by SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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

JWB:ngm

1

Various photographs of ERIC S. GALT were shown to the following individuals on April 18, 1968, by SA's JOHN W. BAUER and HARLEY E. GYLFE at Memphis, Tennessee:

BESSIE BREWER, 422 $\frac{1}{2}$  South Main Street;  
FRANK BREWER, 422 $\frac{1}{2}$  South Main Street;  
CHARLES STEPHENS, 422 $\frac{1}{2}$  South Main Street;  
ANNA CHRISTINE KELLY, Manager, Rebel Motel,  
3466 Lamar Avenue;  
HENRIETTA HAGEMASTER, Desk Clerk, Rebel Motel,  
3466 Lamar Avenue;  
VICTOR DUPRET, owner, Rebel Motel, 3466 Lamar  
Avenue;  
SARA LOVING, maid, Rebel Motel, 3466 Lamar Avenue;  
SADIE MC KAY, maid, Rebel Motel, 3466 Lamar Avenue.

The above individuals stated that the photographs shown to them of ERIC S. GALT do not in any way look familiar to them.

LL

11

**ME 44-1987**

**PERSONS AT REBEL MOTEL  
3466 LAMAR AVENUE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE**

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date April 23, 1968

Mrs. HENRIETTA HAGEMASTER, Desk Clerk, Rebel Motor Hotel, 3466 Lamar Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, was shown various photographs of JAMES EARL RAY and advised that none of these photographs looked familiar to her. She added that she still felt that she would be unable to recognize the individual who registered at the motel as ERIC S. GALT even if she had a face-to-face confrontation with him.

---

13

On 4/22/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA JOHN W. BAUER:tjm Date dictated 4/22/68

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

JWB:cjs

1

Various photographs of JAMES EARL RAY were shown to the following individuals on April 19, 1968, by SA JOHN W. BAUER at the Rebel Restaurant, 3464 Lamar Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee:

GEORGE D. BUNNELL, owner, Rebel Restaurant;

METHEL STACKS, waitress, Rebel Restaurant;

JOYCE B. FOLLIS, waitress, Rebel Restaurant;

JUANITA WILSON, cook, Rebel Restaurant;

L. V. CAMPBELL, cook, Rebel Restaurant.

The above individuals stated the photographs shown to them of JAMES EARL RAY are not in any way familiar to them.

ME 44-1987

OLIVER REXALL DRUG STORE  
WHITEHAVEN, TENNESSEE

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 4/19/68

Mrs. PEGGY BROWN, 4810 Richland, was interviewed at her place of employment, Oliver Rexall Drugstore, Highway 51 South, White Haven, Tennessee, at which time she viewed the photograph of ERIC STARVO GALT wherein GALT is depicted with his eyes closed and she furnished the following information:

She stated that this photograph generally depicts the individual who was in the drugstore on April 3, 1968. She advised that the individual in the store was generally of the same age as GALT, had the same color hair, and similar type complexion. Photograph of GALT appeared to resemble the individual in the manner of build in a general way. She advised that she is unable to say if this is the same person who was in the store. She could not say whether the facial characteristics depicted in the photograph are similar to the man who made the purchase. She advised she does not have a good recollection of the person and may be able to identify this individual if she were to see him in person. She could not comment regarding the eyes, nose, and other facial characteristics depicted in the photograph as she does not know if they are similar to the customer who purchased the Gillette razor kit.

16

On 4/19/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987

by SA ANDREW SLOAN/raj Date dictated 4/19/68

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**

**YORK ARMS COMPANY  
162 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE**

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date April 25, 1968

Mr. RALPH MEREDITH CARPENTER, 4844 Durbin Street, Memphis, Tennessee, a salesman at the York Arms Company, 162 South Main Street, Memphis, was shown a group of pictures taken on different dates of JAMES EARL RAY, FBI No. 405 942 G. Mr. CARPENTER said of the picture of RAY taken March 28, 1955, that he could not eliminate this as being a picture of the individual to whom he had sold a pair of Bushnell binoculars on April 4, 1968. He said that the purchaser of the binoculars did not have any beard or mustache but his facial features resembled those in the March 28, 1955, photograph of RAY. CARPENTER said the 1968 picture of JAMES EARL RAY, as shown on the current Wanted Flyer, Number 442-A, looks more like the binocular purchaser than any picture he has seen to date. CARPENTER mentioned that he does not recall a protruding left ear of the customer and did not note any scar on his face. He said he could not positively identify this 1968 picture of JAMES EARL RAY as being a picture of the binocular purchaser above mentioned, but he believes that it is.

18

On 4/22/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA RALPH J. LIEWER:jap Date dictated 4/25/68

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

INVESTIGATION AT OR NEAR  
THE LORRAINE MOTEL,  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 16, 1968

1

Mrs. NORMAN (GEORGIA M.) DAVIS, 733 Cecil Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky, was interviewed at her residence. She furnished the following information:

She is a Kentucky State Senator from the 33rd District of Louisville, Kentucky. She is also a Board member and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Kentucky Christian Leadership Conference (KCLC) which is affiliated with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

Mrs. DAVIS in the company of Mrs. LUKIE WARD and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING of Louisville, Kentucky, were in Memphis, Tennessee at the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968. Their purpose was to participate in a march scheduled in Memphis, Tennessee for April 5, 1968, to be led by the late Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Mrs. DAVIS volunteered the following as background data concerning the activities of herself, Mrs. WARD and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING immediately prior to their visit to Memphis, Tennessee.

On March 23, 1968, Mrs. DAVIS and Mrs. WARD left Louisville, Kentucky, traveling in Mrs. WARD's Cadillac automobile, to go to Florida for a vacation. On the night of March 23, 1968, they stayed at a Holiday Inn Motel near Birmingham, Alabama, possibly located on Highway 31. The next day they drove to Florida where they stayed at a Howard Johnson Motel in the vicinity of Fort Walton Beach. On March 25, 1968, they drove to Panama City, Florida, where they rented kitchenette #4 of the Treasures Island Motel which was operated by BUD HASTINGS and his wife FRANCES. These individuals also owned the nearby Sunglow Motel. When Mrs. DAVIS and Mrs. WARD occupied kitchenette #4 at the Treasures Island Motel, no other individuals were occupying the motel.

On April 1, 1968, Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING of Louisville flew to Panama City and was met at the airport by Mrs. WARD and Mrs. DAVIS, and on that date, he occupied the kitchenette

On 4-15-68 at Louisville, Kentucky File # LS 44-947

by SA WARREN L. WALSH WLW/ds 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.

next to #4 at the Treasures Island Motel believed to be #5.

About 9:30 a.m., April 3, 1968, Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. KING left Treasures Island Motel in Mrs. WARD's automobile for the purpose of going to Memphis, Tennessee, to participate in the scheduled April 5, 1968, march. Mrs. WARD left some of her clothing in kitchenette #4 at the Treasures Island Motel as she planned to return to the motel after the march for further vacationing. Mrs. DAVIS does not believe that the owners of the motel, the HASTINGS, knew at the time Mrs. DAVIS and her companions left the motel that they were going to Memphis, but the HASTINGS did know that Mrs. WARD planned to return in a few days to the motel.

Mrs. DAVIS later learned that when Mrs. WARD, because of the death of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, decided not to further vacation in Florida and had flown to Panama City on April 6, 1968, to obtain the remainder of her clothing, that Mr. and Mrs. HASTINGS had expressed some displeasure to Mrs. WARD about having as guests Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING. Mrs. DAVIS believed the HASTINGS originally came from Birmingham and recalled that Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING used to pastor a church there.

Mrs. DAVIS and Mrs. WARD and Rev. KING arrived in Memphis, Tennessee from Panama City, Florida, and registered at the Lorraine Motel at about 1 a.m., April 4, 1968. Rev. KING and Mrs. DAVIS did the registering and Mrs. DAVIS occupied Room 201 and Mrs. WARD Room 207.

Immediately upon their arrival at the Lorraine Motel, Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING started making inquiry of other guests at the motel as to the whereabouts of Rev. KING's brother, Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING. He could not be located at the motel and HOSEA WILLIAMS remarked that Dr. KING was at a strategy meeting at a church, the name of which Mrs. DAVIS recalls as the Church of the Minimal Salary (Phonetic). Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. KING then went to the church but Dr. KING was not there. Rev. ANDREW YOUNG and some other people, identities not known to Mrs. DAVIS but appearing to be possibly local pastors and ministers, were holding a meeting at the church. A man called "CABBAGE" was speaking at the meeting when Mrs. DAVIS and her companions arrived,

but Mrs. DAVIS and her companions did not stay at the meeting upon learning Dr. KING was not there. Mrs. DAVIS and her companions went to a smaller room in the church where they met Rev. JESSE JACKSON from Chicago, Illinois and conversed with Rev. JACKSON for a few minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS and her companions thereafter returned to the Lorraine Motel arriving about 3 a.m., and the three of them went to Room 207. Here they conversed among themselves with the door to the motel room open for about an hour or an hour and a half at which point Mrs. DAVIS happened to observe a taxi cab, identity not recalled, arriving at the motel and to depart from the cab Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, Rev. RALPH ABERNATHY, and Rev. BERNARD LEE. Mrs. WARD immediately went out and invited the three individuals into Room 207. Doctor KING and his companions joined Mrs. DAVIS and her companions in Room 207. After approximately five minutes Revs. ABERNATHY and LEE left the room, presumably to go to their own rooms. Mrs. DAVIS, Mrs. WARD, Dr. KING and Rev. KING remained in Room 207 until about 5 a.m. when Dr. KING left, advising he was going to Room 306.

During the conversation by the above individuals in Room 207 no one made any mention of indication that they were fearful of any attempt being made that day on Dr. KING's life.

After Dr. KING left Room 207, Mrs. DAVIS also left the room and went to Room 201. About one-half hour later, Dr. KING came to Room 201 and visited with Mrs. DAVIS for about an hour, the talk consisting of general matters, Mrs. DAVIS remembering specifically that during this time she mentioned to Dr. KING that Miss KATHERINE PEDIN of Kentucky was running for U.S. Senator from Kentucky, and Dr. KING indicated he had met Miss PEDIN as she had interviewed him as a member of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders. Also during this visit Mrs. DAVIS told Dr. KING that in view of the march in Memphis, Tennessee having been rescheduled from April 5 to April 8, 1968, Mrs. DAVIS would probably not remain in Memphis over the weekend, but would return to Louisville. However, Dr. KING asked that before Mrs. DAVIS made a final decision he would like to talk to her further about this but that he had to leave as he had a strategy meeting planned in Room 306 at 8 a.m., April 4, 1968, and he anticipated he would re-contact

her about her decision about noon, April 4, 1968.

Shortly after Dr. KING left Room 201, Mrs. WARD joined Mrs. DAVIS in Room 201 where they had coffee and conversed until about noon when Mrs. WARD left. About 1 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. Dr. KING returned to Room 201 and advised Mrs. DAVIS that he needed to relax for a short while and left Room 306 so as not to be bothered unless important matters occurred. From Room 201 Dr. KING phoned Room 306 and spoke with Rev. LEE advising Rev. LEE as to his whereabouts and informed Rev. LEE he did not want to be disturbed unless it was an important matter. While in Room 201 on this occasion Dr. KING made several phone calls using a credit card. Mrs. DAVIS recalls that Dr. KING phoned his secretary, DORA McDONALD, in Atlanta, Georgia, and also made a call to New York, identity of person called not specifically remembered by Mrs. DAVIS, but possibly being a STAN LEVINSON (phonetic) or a (First Name Unknown) WACHTEL (phonetic) as Mrs. DAVIS had heard Dr. KING speak of these individuals.

Thereafter as Dr. KING was just dialing his mother in Atlanta, Georgia, Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING came into Room 201 and Dr. KING and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING conversed with their mother telephonically for a few minutes. About 45 minutes later Revs. ABERNATHY and LEE came to Room 201 and Mrs. DAVIS then phoned Mrs. WARD and invited her to Room 201. Mrs. WARD did come to Room 201.

Shortly after Mrs. WARD's arrival in Room 201, Mrs. WARD left to pick up some cleaning for Mrs. DAVIS at a laundry and dry cleaning store, name not recalled, located at Beale and Third Streets in Memphis. Mrs. WARD had taken the cleaning to this location earlier on April 4, 1968, for Mrs. DAVIS, probably about 10 a.m. and as Mrs. DAVIS recalls, she had been accompanied on that occasion by Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING.

During the absence of Mrs. WARD from Room 201, CHAUNCEY ESKRIDGE, the attorney from Chicago, and Rev. ANDREW YOUNG, came to Room 201. Mrs. WARD returned from her visit to the laundry very shortly thereafter, making a total of eight individuals in the room. The above eight individuals conversed generally until about 5:45 p.m., when Dr. KING announced that he was going to dinner at the home of Rev. BILLY KYLES in Memphis and he invited Mrs. DAVIS to join him for dinner at the Reverend's home. She advised him that she would need

about 15 minutes or so to freshen up and he stated he would go to his room and freshen up and wait for her. Mrs. DAVIS had just completed her preparation for leaving for dinner because she recalled that she was standing in front of a mirror with her raincoat on taking a last look as to her appearance when she heard a shot. She was stunned for just an instant but then immediately went outside the room and heard someone yell Dr. KING had just been shot. She looked up towards Room 306 and saw what she is convinced were Dr. KING's feet on the balcony protruding slightly over the edge. There was considerable confusion and panic and police arrived almost immediately. Mrs. DAVIS cannot be entirely certain of immediate events following, but as she recalls Rev. JACKSON was in the motel courtyard at the time she went out of Room 201 as was Mrs. WARD. Mrs. DAVIS immediately proceeded up to where Dr. KING was lying and remained in that vicinity until Dr. KING was taken away in an ambulance which Mrs. DAVIS estimates was approximately 10 minutes after she had heard the shot.

Mrs. DAVIS can recall no incident which she observed after coming out of Room 201 after the shot had been fired which she feels has any bearing on ascertaining the identity of the individual responsible for the shot.

After Dr. KING had been taken from the motel in an ambulance, Mrs. DAVIS recalls that Rev. JACKSON was in the courtyard and gave a press statement. Thereafter Mrs. DAVIS went to the motel office where she found Mrs. WARD who was ordering coffee. Then Mrs. DAVIS and a man Mrs. DAVIS recalls as a HAROLD MILLER, possibly a local minister from Memphis or Atlanta, went to Room 207 to advise Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING of the shooting of his brother. Rev. KING was asleep and they did not succeed in awakening him. Thereafter Mrs. WARD came to Room 207 and Mrs. DAVIS and the man she believes was named MILLER left the room.

Later on the night of April 4, 1968, possibly around 8:30 p.m. someone, Mrs. DAVIS did not know who, felt that Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING should not spend the remainder of that night at the Lorraine Motel and Mrs. DAVIS recalls packing her clothes and the three of them going out to the home of Rev. KYLES. After arrival at this home, it was decided again by someone not known to Mrs. DAVIS that Rev. KING would remain at Rev. KYLES that evening but that

Mrs. WARD and Mrs. DAVIS should spend the evening at a Howard Johnson Motel in Memphis. Mrs. WARD and Mrs. DAVIS together with individuals not now recalled went to the Howard Johnson Motel where Mrs. WARD registered for the two of them, but the plans again changed as Mrs. DAVIS recalls HOSEA WILLIAMS indicated that Mrs. DAVIS and her companions should return to the Lorraine Motel for the evening. Mrs. WARD and Mrs. DAVIS were then driven in Mrs. WARD's car by an unknown individual back to the Lorraine Motel where they entered Room 201. A short time later Rev. KYLES brought Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING back to the motel at which point Mrs. WARD left Room 201. Mrs. DAVIS spent the remainder of the night by herself in Room 201.

On Friday morning, April 5, 1968, Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING left the Lorraine Motel to go to the airport to meet the wife of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING who was arriving in Memphis on that morning.

Mrs. WARD and Mrs. DAVIS left Memphis, Tennessee, about 9 a.m., April 5, 1968, and drove to Atlanta, Georgia.

Mrs. DAVIS advised that during her stay in Memphis, on April 4 - 5, 1968, she personally had received no threats against her life nor does she have any knowledge of anyone at the Lorraine Motel being specifically threatened on that occasion.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 16, 1968

1

Mrs. JASPER D. (LUCRETIA B.) WARD, also known as Lukie Ward, 2540 Ransdell, Louisville, Kentucky, was interviewed in the office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Louisville, Kentucky, and furnished the following information:

For the past several years she has served as administrative assistant to Reverend A.D. WILLIAMS KING of Louisville, Kentucky, and as secretary of the Kentucky Christian Leadership Conference (KCLC) at Louisville, Kentucky, an affiliate of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

About midnight April 3, 1968, or shortly thereafter on April 4, 1968, Mrs. WARD in the company of Mrs. GEORGIA DAVIS of Louisville, Kentucky, a Board member of the KCLC and a Kentucky State Senator from Louisville, and the Reverend A.D. WILLIAMS KING of KCLC and pastor of the Zion Baptist Church in Louisville, arrived in Memphis, Tennessee, in Mrs. WARD's 1967 Cadillac, bearing 1968 Kentucky license K79-447. The purpose of their visit to Memphis, Tennessee was to participate in a scheduled march there on April 5, 1968 to be led by Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Mrs. WARD and her companions registered in the Lorraine Motel occupying Rooms 201 and 207.

Mrs. WARD did not leave the Lorraine Motel from the time of her arrival until after the shooting of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING at the motel at about 6 p.m. on April 4, 1968, except for one occasion. This was in the afternoon of April 4, 1968, possibly around 3 p.m., when Mrs. WARD left the motel to go to a nearby laundry, exact location not recalled, but the name of the laundry believed to be One-Hour Martinizing. The purpose of her going to the laundry was to pick up some clothes that were there ready for delivery to Mrs. GEORGIA DAVIS. When Mrs. WARD returned from the laundry, she joined a group that was gathered in Room 201 of the Lorraine Motel. As she recalls the individuals in the room were Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., Rev. RALPH ABERNATHY, Rev. ANDREW YOUNG, Attorney CHAUNCEY ESKRIDGE, Rev. BERNARD LEE, Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING and Mrs. GEORGIA DAVIS.

On 4-15-68 at Louisville, Kentucky File # LS 44-947  
by SA WARREN L. WALSH WLW/ds 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.



The above group remained together engaging in just general conversation until approximately 5:40 p.m., April 4, 1968, at which time the group decided that they would go to dinner, and the individuals left to go to their various rooms to freshen up for dinner. Mrs. WARD left Room 201 in the company of Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING and the two of them went to Room 207. Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING had partaken of some alcoholic beverages during the afternoon and had decided to rest rather than join the group for dinner. Approximately 15 - 20 minutes after arriving in Room 207 at which time Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING was sleeping, Mrs. WARD heard a shot. She immediately opened the door to the room and looked out and heard someone yell that Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING had just been shot. The news stunned Mrs. WARD and while she cannot be exactly certain of her exact movements immediately thereafter, as she recalls upon hearing the news she briefly re-entered Room 207 and then immediately went out into the courtyard of the motel. There was much confusion and police were immediately in the area. Mrs. WARD observed nothing which gave her any indication as to the possible identity of the individual responsible for the shooting. Mrs. WARD recalls that she did not advise Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING of the shooting of his brother until about 20 minutes after the incident occurred. Rev. KING's reaction was one of extreme grief and he gave no indication that he had any idea as to the identity of the person responsible.

As Mrs. WARD recalls, someone, specific identity not now recalled, thought it best that Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING not remain the remainder of the night of April 4 - 5, 1968, at the Lorraine Motel. Accordingly, at about 10 p.m. they left the motel and went to the home of a Rev. WILLIAM KYLES whom Mrs. WARD believes is a minister in Memphis. Rev. KYLES or someone suggested that Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING remain at his home that evening and that Mrs. WARD and Mrs. DAVIS obtain motel accommodations at a nearby Howard Johnson's Motel. Mrs. DAVIS and Mrs. WARD did go to such a motel and Mrs. WARD registered in the motel, but just as she did so HOSEA WILLIAMS who was present at the time decided that Mrs. WARD, Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING should go back to the Lorraine Motel and spend the rest of the night. They did this.

LS 44-947

3

Mrs. WARD and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING being in Room 207 and Mrs. DAVIS occupying Room 201. En route Mrs. WARD had stopped at a drug store and purchased some sleeping pills which she administered to the Rev. KING and Mrs. DAVIS because of their extremely excited condition.

Mrs. WARD commented that she possesses no information which she feels might assist in identifying the individual responsible for the shooting of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 16, 1968

1

Mrs. JASPER D. (LUCRETIA B.) WARD, also known as Lukie Ward, 2540 Ransdell, Louisville, Kentucky, telephonically furnished the following information:

Since being interviewed on April 15, 1968, Mrs. WARD recalls that in addition to leaving the Lorraine Motel in the afternoon of April 4, 1968, she had left the motel on that date on one other occasion. This was during the morning, believed to be around 11 a.m., when she took some cleaning for Mrs. GEORGIA DAVIS to the nearby cleaners, the One-Hour Martinizing. On this occasion, she was accompanied by the Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING because she recalls that as she was taking the cleaning into the cleaners, Rev. KING purchased some beer from a store located diagonally across the corner from the cleaners.

Mrs. WARD also advised that she and Mrs. DAVIS and Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING, prior to their arrival in Memphis, Tennessee about midnight, April 3, 1968, had been vacationing in Panama City, Florida, at the Treasures Island Motel. They had driven to Memphis in Mrs. WARD's automobile from Florida. Prior to leaving the Florida motel, Mrs. WARD had notified Mrs. FRANCES HASTINGS who, together with her husband, owns the motel, that they were departing but that she, Mrs. WARD, would return shortly for about a week's stay. Mrs. WARD inadvertently told Mrs. HASTINGS that she and her companions were going to Birmingham. Mrs. WARD recalls that when she and her companions were nearly halfway to Memphis that she remembered that she had erroneously told Mrs. HASTINGS they were going to Birmingham. She feels that she made this mistake in that she had earlier talked to the HASTINGS who had told her they were originally from Birmingham, Alabama.

After Dr. KING's assassination, Mrs. WARD changed her plans about spending any further time in Florida and at 6:50 a.m., April 6, 1968, she flew from Memphis, Tennessee, to Panama City, Florida, to get the rest of her clothes. She rented a car at the airport and drove to the motel. When she arrived at the motel, she met Mrs. HASTINGS who immediately

On 4-16-68 at Louisville, Kentucky File # LS 44-947

by SA WARREN L. WALSH: WLW/ds 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.

advised Mrs. WARD that the motel was full and there was no room for Mrs. WARD. Mrs. WARD felt this statement to be untrue as there appeared to be room at the motel, and she spoke rather plainly to Mrs. HASTINGS about her feeling that Mrs. HASTINGS did not want her at the motel because she had been in the company of two Negroes, Rev. KING and Mrs. DAVIS. Mrs. HASTINGS made some comment about them, the HASTINGS, run a respectable motel, and Mrs. WARD replied that it was because the motel had that reputation that she and her companions had originally decided to vacation there.

Mrs. WARD stated that it appeared to her that the motel owners, the HASTINGS, did not object to herself and Mrs. DAVIS having occupied the motel, but apparently objected to the presence in the motel of Rev. A.D. WILLIAMS KING.

Mrs. WARD stated that at no time did either of the HASTINGS make any type of specific threat to Mrs. WARD, against Mrs. WARD or her companions, but it was clear to Mrs. WARD that she was no longer welcome at the HASTINGS' motel.

Mrs. WARD left Panama City by plane about 1:30 p.m. on April 6, 1968 and flew to Atlanta, Georgia, where she was met by Mrs. DAVIS.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/17/68

1

WALTER LANE BAILEY, Owner, Lorraine Hotel-Motel, 406 Mulberry Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that a check of his records reflected the following named persons as having been registered into his motel on either April 3 or April 4, 1968, or both dates:

- 1) GERALD HARRELL  
Room No. 10  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 5427 Urguhart Avenue  
New Orleans, Louisiana
- 2) JAMES LEWIS  
Room No. 11  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 78 West Trigg Avenue  
Memphis, Tennessee
- 3) M. JACKSON  
Room No. 12  
on April 3, 1968  
no address given
- 4) R. ROGERS  
Room No. 200  
on April 3, 1968  
no address given
- 5) WILLIE WILLIAM  
Room No. 201  
on April 3, 1968  
address: 810 Parson Street  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 6) R. B. COTTONREADER  
Room No. 202  
on April 3, 1968  
address: 408 Third Street  
Marks, Mississippi

31

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

by SA EUGENE A. MEDORI, JR. and  
SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON SMD/mnr Date dictated 4/17/68

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

- 7) TOBIE WYNN  
Room No. 204  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 3204 St.  
Columbus, Georgia
- 8) BERNARD LEE  
Room No. 206 (on April 3, 1968)  
Room No. 205 (on April 4, 1968)  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 9) TRACY WRIGHT  
Room No. 208  
on April 3-4, 1968  
no address given
- 10) ANDREW YOUNG  
Room No. 209  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 11) JOHN WILLIAM  
Room No. 210  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 12) WARREN LARDSON  
Room No. 211  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 1076 Walton Avenue  
Dayton, Ohio
- 13) EUGENE COURTNEY  
Room No. 212  
on April 3-4, 1968  
no address given
- 14) WILLIAM MALONEY  
Room No. 301  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia

- 15) P. A. RANCE  
Room No. 303 (on April 3, 1968)  
Room No. 200 (on April 4, 1968)  
no address given
  
- 16) JAMES ORANGE  
Room No. 304  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
  
- 17) JESSIE JACKSON  
Room No. 305  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 366 East 47th Street  
Chicago, Illinois
  
- 18) MARTIN KING  
Room No. 306  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
  
- 19) RALPH ABERNATHY  
Room No. 306  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
  
- 20) DOROTHY COTTON  
Room No. 307  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
  
- 21) JAMES LOVE  
Room No. 308  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 8231 Chancery Court  
Alexandria, Virginia
  
- 22) JOSEPH LOUW  
Room No. 309  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 45 Tiemann Place  
New York, New York

ME 44-1987

4

- 23) CHARLES BALLARD  
Room No. 310  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 506 Kansas Street  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 24) STERLING TUCKER  
Room No. 311  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 626 Third Street, N.W.  
Washington, D. C.
- 25) Reverend SAMUEL KYLES  
Room No. 312  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 704 South Parkway East  
Memphis, Tennessee
- 26) JEAN SMITH  
Room No. 314  
on April 3-4, 1968  
no address given
- 27) MABELLE HENDRICKS  
Room No. 315  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 767 Peachtree Street  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 28) JAMES WELDON  
Room No. 316  
on April 3-4, 1968  
address: 111 Hunter Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 29) A. D. KING  
Room No. 201  
on April 4, 1968  
address: Louisville, Kentucky
- 30) OFFELIN RUTHERFORD  
Room No. 202  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia



ME 44-1987

5

- 31) J. B. WILLIAMS  
Room No. 203  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 2510 Jackson Avenue  
Forrest City, Arkansas
  
- 32) HENRY ANTHONY  
Room No. 206  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
  
- 33) BERNARD LAFAYETTE  
Room No. 206  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 334 Auburn Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia
  
- 34) C. A. DAVIS  
Room 207  
on April 4, 1968  
address: Louisville, Kentucky
  
- 35) L. B. WARD  
Room No. 207  
on April 4, 1968  
address: Louisville, Kentucky
  
- 36) HERMAN SWEAT  
Room No. 214  
on April 4, 1968  
no address given
  
- 37) EARL CALDWELL  
Room No. 215  
on April 4, 1968  
no address given
  
- 38) JOHN HALL  
Room No. 1  
on April 4, 1968  
no address given
  
- 39) S. MC COLLOUGH  
Room No. 12  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 6618 South Woodlawn Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois

ME 44-1987

6

- 40) ----- HILL (first name not given)  
Room No. 13  
on April 4, 1968  
no address given
- 41) JIMER GUEMOOR  
Room No. 14  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 750 Pearl Street  
Grenada, Mississippi
- 42) Reverend H. VERNER  
Room No. 202  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 5320 South Drexel Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois
- 43) Reverend W. BENNETT  
Room No. 202  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 5320 South Drexel Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois
- 44) GARY MASSONI  
Room No. 214  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 366 East 47th Street  
Chicago, Illinois
- 45) JAMES BEVEL  
unknown room number  
on April 4, 1968  
address: 8407 South Ribash Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date April 26, 1968

Reverend SAMUEL B. KYLES, minister of the Monumental Baptist Church, 704 South Parkway East, who resides at 2215 South Parkway East, Memphis, Tennessee, on interview advised as follows:

Reverend KYLES, who has lived in Memphis for approximately the past eight years, is on the Executive Board of the Memphis, Tennessee, Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and is also a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the national headquarters of which is Atlanta, Georgia, and the President of which, up until April 4, 1968, was Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Reverend KYLES advised that a sanitation workers' strike began in Memphis, Tennessee, February 12, 1968, and that shortly after its start a group of Negro ministers in Memphis, including himself, banded together to form a group which adopted the name of Community on the Move for Equality (COME), raising funds for the sanitation strikers and assisting them in daily marches and other strike-support activity. He stated that as early as March 18, 1968, he, along with some of the other COME leaders, induced Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., to come to Memphis where, on the night of March 18, 1968, he gave an inspiring talk at Mason Temple to approximately 10,000 to 12,000 people, urging the Negro community of Memphis to unite behind the sanitation workers.

KYLES and some of the other COME leaders also induced Dr. KING to return to Memphis on the morning of March 28, 1968, to lead a massive downtown march in support of the sanitation workers.

Considerable breaking of downtown windows and looting resulted during this march, as a result of which KYLES stated the sanitation strike received nationwide publicity, and Dr. KING agreed to return to Memphis, along with other SCLC staff members, in early April, 1968, to continue support on behalf of the sanitation workers.

37

On 4/23/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

SAs HOWELL S. LOWE  
by and WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE WHL:gmh Date dictated 4/25/68

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.

Reverend KYLES recalled that Dr. KING actually returned to Memphis on Wednesday morning, April 3, 1968, with several of his staff associates including the Vice President of SCLC, Reverend RALPH D. ABERNATHY, and his administrative assistant BERNARD LEE. They all checked into the Lorraine Hotel and Motel, 406 Mulberry Street, Memphis, and actually KYLES had rented rooms for some of the SCLC staff members under his name. He pointed out that actually he was registered in Room 312 of the Lorraine Motel as of April 3, 1968, although he did not physically occupy this room and did not now recall the exact SCLC individual who occupied Room 312. He recalled that Dr. KING occupied Room 306, as did Reverend RALPH D. ABERNATHY.

He recalled that Dr. KING and his staff remained in Memphis on the night of April 3, 1968, and also remained in Memphis on April 4, 1968. In addition, he pointed out that there had been widespread publicity in not only the Memphis news media, including the two daily white newspapers, but also on virtually all of the radio and television stations concerning the presence of Dr. KING and his staff in Memphis and of the fact that they were staying at the Lorraine Motel. He stated he could not recall the specific radio broadcast but there was at least one broadcast, possibly more, which even gave the room number, namely Room 306, in which Dr. KING was staying in Memphis, and that this information was readily available to anyone who tended to read the newspaper or took the time to listen to the radio news broadcasts. In other words, he said it was no secret as to where Dr. KING was staying.

Reverend KYLES recalled that he personally went to the Lorraine Motel at approximately 3:30 p.m. on April 4, 1968, and recalled that the Operation Breadbasket band, a singing group of the SCLC, was rehearsing in one of the rooms in the motel, this group being led by BEN BRANCH, a former music teacher of Memphis, Tennessee. KYLES joined this group and they all sang various hymns and SCLC songs until approximately 5 p.m. At this point, Reverend KYLES went to Room 306 of the Lorraine Motel to visit with Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., and Reverend RALPH D. ABERNATHY. He pointed out that he had earlier invited Dr. KING and Reverend ABERNATHY to his home at 2215 South Parkway East for a "soul dinner" on the evening of April 4, 1968, pointing out

that Dr. KING and Reverend ABERNATHY both savored "soul food," which would normally consist of neck bones, chitterlings, turnip greens and black-eyed peas, and that his wife had consented to cook such a dinner for Dr. KING and his group. He pointed out that both KING and ABERNATHY had been reminded by him earlier that dinner was to be at approximately 6 p.m.

He recalled that during the approximate period from 5:30 p.m. to 5:55 p.m., April 4, 1968, that Dr. KING, Reverend ABERNATHY and Reverend KYLES sat and talked in Room 306 as Dr. KING and ABERNATHY dressed in preparation for the dinner appointment. At a time estimated by KYLES as being 5:55 p.m., or thereabouts, Dr. KING walked out of Room 306 of the Lorraine Motel, the door of which faces west and overlooks a swimming pool and parking area onto Mulberry Street, which is a narrow north-south street in Memphis. Dr. KING's room, 306, was on the second floor and as one walks out of the room there is a balcony and walkway area, the balcony having an iron rail approximately three feet high to keep one from falling off the balcony. Dr. KING, KYLES recalled, stood on the balcony and was speaking with various people standing in the parking area of the motel directly beneath him. One of the persons with whom Dr. KING was speaking was Reverend JESSE JACKSON, an SCLC staff member from Chicago, Illinois. KYLES recalled leaving Room 306 and going out and talking with Dr. KING, telling him not to bring too many people to his house or there would not be enough food to satisfy all of them. KYLES also recalled that SOLOMON JONES, a local Negro who works for one of the funeral homes, had been Dr. KING's chauffeur while in Memphis and that KING may have made some comment to JONES about getting the car ready for their trip to the KYLES residence.

Reverend KYLES also recalled that at about this period of time Reverend ABERNATHY had applied shaving cream to his face preparing to take a quick shave before departing to dinner and that KYLES and KING were standing side by side on the balcony and he also recalled that KING spoke to CHAUNCEY ESKRIDGE who is an attorney for SCLC and who was in Memphis with the SCLC staff.

Others recalled by KYLES being on the ground level within viewing and listening distance of Dr. KING were Reverend JAMES L. BEVEL, also of the SCLC staff and who has recently been living in Chicago, and several young Negroes, names not recalled, who had been hanging around and supporting the sanitation workers strike. He pointed out that he would put these folks in the category of "hero worshipers" who liked to be around KING and other important personages.

At this point, KYLES estimated the time as being approximately 6 o'clock p.m., and stated that he, KYLES, started to walk north on the balcony walkway toward the old Lorraine Hotel portion of the establishment for the purpose of getting his car, which was parked on the parking lot. He recalled looking down and saying something to CHAUNCEY ESKRIDGE who was standing on the ground and estimated that he had walked approximately four door-lengths north of Room 306 when he, KYLES, heard a loud but possibly muffled sound. At first he thought it was a noise from the immediate area possibly caused by the backfiring of an automobile or possibly even a loud firecracker which had exploded in the immediate vicinity.

He was next conscious of seeing Reverend JAMES L. BEVEL who had been standing on the ground north of Room 306 running to the motel area ostensibly for cover and recalled some unknown individual yelling in a loud voice, "They've shot MARTIN." At this point he turned around and looked back south toward the entrance of Room 306 and was next conscious of seeing Dr. KING's prone body. KING was resting on the balcony floor with his back to the floor, his face facing upward, his feet partially protruding through the grill work of the iron railway, and his head headed in a south-easterly direction toward the passageway just south of Room 306.

KYLES continued that he took a quick glance at KING's prone body after reaching same and saw a gaping hole in what he recalled to be the right side of KING's face in the area of his cheek bone and protruding downward into his neck area. He stated that he was not familiar with guns or gun wounds but he subconsciously realized that the

noise which he had heard had undoubtedly been that of a gunshot which had wounded Dr. KING. He pointed out that KING's eyes appeared to be open and that he personally felt KING may still have been alive. He was not conscious of anyone else near KING's body at this time and pointed out that he went into a state of shock and ran rather hysterically into Room 306 where he attempted to use a telephone for the purpose of calling an ambulance. In the meantime, ABERNATHY had run out of Room 306 with shaving cream still on his face in an effort to see what had happened to Dr. KING. KYLES pointed out that in his confusion he was unable to pick up the phone properly to call the motel switchboard to ask for an ambulance and recalled ABERNATHY running back into the room and telling him to settle down and gain his composure as everything would be all right.

KYLES came back out of the room to the vicinity of KING's body and was next conscious of seeing several uniformed Memphis Police officers running on foot toward the vicinity of KING's body and recalled some of them yelling, "What happened?" He stated that he recalled yelling at some of the police officers to call an ambulance. He was next conscious of Reverend ABERNATHY leaning over KING's prone body attempting to talk with KING or to get some response from him and could recall hearing ABERNATHY say, "MARTIN, can you hear me?"

Reverend KYLES recalled running into Room 306 and grabbing up a bedspread off one of the beds which he brought out to use to cover KING's body. He recalled that a white male employee of the United States Justice Department, name not recalled, who had been staying at the motel brought a towel which someone held over the large gaping wound on the right side of KING's face.

Within a few moments an ambulance arrived to take KING's body to a hospital and he recalled that a JOSEPH LOUW, an African who is a photographer and who was staying at the motel, took some pictures in the immediate vicinity and that many of the people who by this time had come to the balcony seemed to point toward the west side of Mulberry where there is a thicket of bushes and empty land bordered further on the west by the back side of some old two-story brick buildings which face on Main Street and indicated in

their pointing and comments that the shot probably came from that general direction. In other words, the shot came from the west toward the east.

Thereafter, according to Reverend KYLES, an ambulance crew took Dr. KING's body to the St. Joseph Hospital.

Reverend KYLES looked at a series of photographs which appeared in "Life Magazine," issue of April 12, 1968, some of which were taken immediately after the shooting of Dr. KING and prior to the arrival of the ambulance and which depict Dr. KING's prone body lying face up on the concrete walkway on the second floor balcony of the Lorraine Motel and taken by Photographer JOSEPH LOUW. He stated that the only people that he could identify by name in the early photographs prior to the arrival of the ambulance were Reverend ANDREW YOUNG of the SCLC staff and some local unidentified Negroes who were apparently assisting in an effort to render immediate first aid to Dr. KING. Reverend KYLES pointed out that these photographs must have been taken almost immediately following the shooting of Dr. KING because they do not show the bedspread over KING's body.

He stated that very few people actually were cognizant of the fact that Dr. KING was to be a dinner guest at his home on the evening of April 4, 1968; that among the guests who had been invited to his recollection were Dr. KING, his brother, Reverend A. D. WILLIAMS KING, and two of the latter's companions, Mrs. LUKIE WARD and Mrs. GEORGIA M. DAVIS, both of Louisville, Kentucky; and that Reverend ABERNATHY was to have been there, as was CHAUNCEY ESKRIDGE. He stated that Reverend ANDREW YOUNG and HOSEA WILLIAMS, both of the SCLC staff, were also to be his dinner guests on that evening.

He stated that to his recollection there had been no publicity concerning the fact that KING and his small party were to be his dinner guests and that it appeared to be a mere coincidence that Dr. KING walked out in front of the doorway of Room 306 and stood there some four to five minutes prior to the time that he was shot.



Reverend KYLES stated that he had searched his memory during the intervening time subsequent to Dr. KING's being shot and that at no time could he recall seeing anyone to the west or northwest from which direction he is now convinced the shot came. He saw no one looking out any of the windows in the buildings facing Main Street, the rear entrances of which would have faced the Motel; and he saw no one on the ground below.

He stated that he talked with CHAUNCEY ESKRIDGE shortly after the shooting and that ESKRIDGE who was on the ground level in the parking area in front of the Motel stated that after the shot he, ESKRIDGE, had run west from the Motel to the middle of Mulberry Street but that he did not see anyone with any firearm either on the ground or in any of the buildings. Reverend KYLES recalled that SOLOMON JONES has been reported to have stated that he saw someone possibly with a white headpiece in the ground area just west of the west side of Mulberry Street behind the bushes and possibly saw someone drop something in that area.

Reverend KYLES stated that in fairness to JONES, JONES could not have seen the ground area which he had originally described because of the fact that there is a brick retaining wall which surrounds the swimming pool and that JONES would have been behind this wall when KING was shot and could not have seen behind the bushes on the west side of Mulberry Street as this wall is about eight feet tall.

Reverend KYLES concluded that none of his acquaintances in the SCLC or other acquaintances in Memphis who have been close to the Negro movement can recall anything concerning any suspicious movements in the vicinity of the Lorraine Motel immediately preceding or during the time that Dr. KING was shot.

ME 44-1987

HSL:PEH

1

On April 18, 1968, CHARLES BALLARD, 830 Kansas Street, Memphis, Tennessee, personally contacted the Memphis, Tennessee, FBI Office and advised SA HOWELL S. LOWE and SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE that he registered into room 310 of the Lorraine Motel on the afternoon of March 30, 1968, and remained registered at this motel until April 4, 1968. He departed from this motel just prior to 6 P.M. the evening of April 4, 1968.

BALLARD advised he was not at the motel at the time Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING was shot and advised he has no knowledge regarding who may have shot Dr. KING. He stated that during the period he resided at the motel, no one inquired of him of any information regarding Dr. KING, and he noticed no one in particular expressing any unusual interest in the location of Dr. KING's room at the motel.

BALLARD stated that when he departed the motel at approximately 5:45 P.M., April 4, 1968, there were several persons walking around in front of the motel. He stated he paid no particular attention to these persons and is unable to recall anyone in this group whom he knows.