SL: 44-775

PREVIOUS THREATS TO DR. KING

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

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SL: 44-775
HRD:jfb

RE: PREVIOUS THREATS TO KING -
DELANO ELMER WALKER

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

A review of the files of the St. Louis Division concerning DELANO ELMER WALKER on April 26, 1968, by Special Agent HAROLD R. DOBSON, disclosed that during 1965 WALKER reported that while drinking in a bar in St. Louis on November 9, 1965, he was approached by a single unidentified white male who talked about the racial situation and the possibility of his assassinating Reverend KING. He alleged that the individual gave him $50.00 and indicated that he would contact him in a few days to make more definite plans. He stated that thereafter the same man contacted him on November 11, 1965, at his residence at Elvins, Missouri, and that he told the individual that he was not interested. The Chief of Police, Elvins, Missouri, interviewed WALKER's wife and neighbors on November 11, 1965, and they advised that no one had visited the WALKER residence on that date.

AT MOBERLY, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent WILLIAM R. DUNCAN:

WALKER was located at the Missouri Training School for Men, Moberly, Missouri, where he is serving a three-year sentence for assault. He was originally sentenced October 2, 1967, and was received at the Training School on November 14, 1967. The record indicated that during interview by prison officials on November 20, 1967, he mentioned several "bizarre incidents" including an allegation that he had been contacted to assassinate KING. Prison records indicate that WALKER has a history of mental illness.

He was interviewed on April 26, 1968, by Special Agent DUNCAN, at which time he advised that several months ago, while

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drinking in a bar in St. Louis two men talked to him about the racial situation and that one of them gave him $50.00 and stated they would see him in a few days concerning the possibility of assassinating KING. Three or four days later three men in a new Buick automobile drove to his home at Elvins, Missouri, and he told them that he was not interested in their proposition. He claimed that his wife had also seen these men. He stated that shortly after the incident he had been taken to a State Mental Hospital at Farmington, Missouri.

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RE: PREVIOUS THREATS TO DR. KING -
BENNY K. PINKSTON, FBI NUMBER
314 743 1

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

A review of St. Louis file on April 27, 1968, by Special Agent HAROLD R. DOBSON disclosed receipt of information October 9, 1964, from the St. Louis, Missouri, Police Department, that captioned individual had been reported by the Police Department of Cairo, Illinois, to have threatened Dr. KING's life and to have consulted Attorney DAVID V. LANSDEN, Cairo, Illinois, as to what would happen to him if he killed KING. The Cairo, Illinois, Police Department indicated PINKSTON was reported to be in Sikeston, Missouri, when foregoing information was received.

The Little Rock, Arkansas, Division advised on August 18, 1967, that captioned individual, who is also known as B. K. PINKSTON, "HARDWALKER," "PREACHER," and "PROFESSOR," was described as a Negro male, born [redacted] at Forrest City, Arkansas, height - 5 feet 5 inches, weight - 140 pounds, brown eyes, black hair, medium build, with a two inch vertical scar on his forehead. His listed residence was given as Forrest City, Arkansas, but it was indicated he made frequent trips from there and that he had claimed to have traveled in Mexico extensively.

Files of the St. Louis, Missouri, Police Department, as examined on April 26, 1968, by Investigative Clerk JOHN D. DYER, JR., disclosed that BENNY J. PINKSTON, FBI Number 314 743 1, had been arrested by that Department on February 14, 1968, and charged with the possession of marijuana. The record indicated he had been released on bail March 13, 1968. At the time of the arrest he gave no St. Louis address but listed residences at 143 West Scott Street, Forrest City, Arkansas, and 143 West or South Cotton Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

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WCJ:jfb

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

PREVIOUS THREATS TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

By communication dated April 26, 1968, Indianpolis Office requested the St. Louis Office to furnish San Francisco a photograph of LAWRENCE DONALD STOUT, a subject of a former Bureau case, and possible co-conspirator in this case.

On April 27, 1968, Special Agent WALTER C. JOHNSON forwarded a 1953 photograph of LAWRENCE D. STOUT, Federal Bureau of Investigation Number 49 59 380, to San Francisco for their investigative assistance in determining if STOUT is a possible co-conspirator.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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WCJ:jfb

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

BACKGROUND - JAMES EARL RAY

By communication dated April 25, 1968, Kansas City Office advised St. Louis that Mrs. JEAN PRANGER, Columbia, Missouri, knew an ex-convict by the name of JOHN RAY, whose wife was named LINDA. RAY at the time was under the supervision of State Parole Officer LEMUEL HARRY at Belleville, Illinois. HARRY currently employed at Brown Shoe Company, St. Louis, Missouri.

On April 27, 1968, LEMUEL HARRY, 112 South Eighth Street, Belleville, Illinois, employed at Brown Shoe Company, St. Louis, Missouri, advised Special Agent WALTER C. JOHNSON that he was a former State Parole Officer at Belleville, Illinois, from 1951 to 1953. He recalled LINDA RAY, a German war bride, worked under his supervision at Wohl Shoe Company, St. Louis, Missouri, about fourteen years ago but he did not know her husband or recall that he was a parolee under his supervision. He pointed out that fifteen years had elapsed since he was a Parole Officer and the names of parolees under his supervision had been forgotten.

JAMES EARL RAY was unknown to LEMUEL HARRY.

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HRD:pjh

TRANSPORTATION CHECK

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI:

On April 11, 1968, Mr. DAVID LEIGH, Manager, St. Louis - Lambert Airport, advised SA HAROLD R. DOBSON no international flights originate or terminate at the St. Louis Airport.

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HRD:paw

POSSIBILITY OF RAY'S RELATIVES
IN ELSBERRY, MISSOURI

On April 24, 1968, the Bureau advised of receipt of information from one RAY RATLIFF, Washington, D. C., to the effect he had distant cousins named RAY in the Elsberry, Missouri, area, who might be related to the subject RAY. He suggested his brother, SAM RATLIFF, would know the identities and locations of these cousins.

The following investigation was conducted by SA WILLIAM R. DUNCAN, on April 24, 1968.

Mr. SAM RATLIFF, Route 3, Box 277, Butler, Missouri, advised that the only three cousins named RAY known to him in the Elsberry, Missouri, area are GUY RAY, operator of the R & B Quarry; EARL RAY, superintendent of the Elsberry Drainage District; and, LEO RAY, a retired mechanic. He had no information that they were in any way related to the subject.

Chief of Police JOHN E. STEWARD, Elsberry, Missouri, and Sheriff IRL ELLIOTT, Troy, Missouri, advised on the same date that GUY, EARL, and LEO RAY of Elsberry, Missouri, are individuals of good character and reputation. They stated further that there have been no indications that subject was in the Elsberry area.

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WRB:klr

Re: JAMES EARL RAY
FAMILY

On Saturday, April 20, 1968, HARRY NAETER, part owner of the Southeast Missourian newspaper, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, telephonically contacted the Cape Girardeau Resident Agent, DOUGLAS ROSENBERGER, and advised that their employee, GENE ORR, had reported to him that he, ORR, had been in the Last Chance Pizza Parlor in Cape Girardeau, on Friday, April 19, 1968. While there, he overheard a person named MELVIN DECK, who stated he lived on a farm between Advance and Zalma, Missouri, state that he knew the father of JAMES EARL RAY, who was being sought for the killing of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING.

AT FREDERICKTOWN, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted on April 23, 1968, by Special Agent WILLIAM R. BURTON:

MELVIN E. DECK, Route 2, Box 200, Fredericktown, Missouri, advised that he was in Cape Girardeau on Friday, April 19, 1968, at a pizza parlor and tavern and saw a photograph of the man wanted for killing Dr. KING on television, and mentioned to the bartender that he knew the father of this man. DECK then related as follows:

He used to be acquainted with BILL RAY, who he claimed to be the father of JAMES EARL RAY, and that he last saw BILL RAY about five years ago at an auction in Cottage Hills, Illinois, which is a suburb of Alton, Illinois. BILL RAY was then living at Alton and had moved to there from the Zalma, Missouri, vicinity in about 1940. BILL RAY originally married VESTA MEADORS, who he claimed to be the mother of JAMES EARL RAY. VESTA MEADORS moved to Alton with BILL RAY but then moved back to Zalma, where she lives with her mother. He did not know if VESTA MEADORS and BILL RAY were divorced or separated. The father of VESTA MEADORS was TONY MEADORS, who is now deceased. He stated that BILL RAY had two sons and two daughters that he knows of; the youngest son being named COTTON, and whom he thought was identical

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with JAMES EARL RAY, and an older son, named JOE, present location not known. In addition, the two daughters' names he could not furnish, but stated that they were married and lived in the Alton, Illinois, vicinity. Mr. DECK made his identification from the photographs contained on Identification Order number 4182. He stated that the profile photograph of JAMES EARL RAY, the one on the left, was almost an exact likeness of the son COTTON, who is the son of BILL RAY, now residing at Alton, Illinois. Further, he stated that he saw this COTTON RAY about four or five years ago with his father at the auction in Cottage Hills, Illinois.

Based on information already developed in this matter concerning the relatives of the subject, JAMES EARL RAY, and the fact that JAMES EARL RAY was in the Missouri State Penitentiary four to five years ago, no further investigation was undertaken to identify or interview any other relatives of BILL RAY or BILL RAY himself, as outlined above by Mr. MELVIN E. DECK.

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HRD/leh

RE: REVEREND FLOYD BROWER

The Little Rock Division advised on April 8, 1968, of receipt of information from DOROTHY JONES, Route 1, Senath, Missouri, an employee in the Commissary at Blytheville, Air Force Base, Arkansas, on that date, that she had attended services at the First Methodist Church, Senath, Missouri, on April 7, 1968, during which a Brother BROWER, a visiting minister, who is District Superintendent of the Methodist Church, residing at Poplar Bluff, Missouri, made the statement from the pulpit that he was sorry to hear of KING's death but would be even sorrier when the announcement was made identifying the person responsible. He stated this was because the assassin was from Pemiscot County, Missouri. She stated she interpreted this statement to mean that the assassin was from Pemiscot County, Missouri, but was not presently residing there.

AT POPLAR BLUFF, MISSOURI

On April 9, 1968, Reverend FLOYD BROWER, 1709 Big Bend, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, advised SA WILLIAM R. BURTON that the basis for his statement from the pulpit at the Senath, Missouri, Methodist Church the previous Sunday that he was sorry to hear of KING's death but would be even sorrier when the announcement was made identifying the assassin had been based on an article appearing in either the St. Louis Globe Democrat, a St. Louis Metropolitan daily newspaper, or one of the Southeast Missouri papers, which stated that the search for KING's assassin had spread to the Boot Heel area of Missouri, and that he was possibly from Pemiscot County. Reverend BOWER stated he had also heard several rumors that the assassin was from Pemiscot County. He advised he had no other basis for making the statement; had never heard anyone mention names of a possible assassin; and was now sorry he had made such a statement, from the pulpit.

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INVESTIGATIONS OF PERSONS BEARING PHYSICAL RESEMBLANCE TO SUBJECT, ORIGINATING IN OTHER DIVISIONS, AND RESOLVED BY ST. LOUIS, OR ORIGINATING IN ST. LOUIS, AND REFERRED TO OTHER DIVISIONS FOR RESOLUTION.

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SL 44-775
HRD:amb

RE: WILLARD BENFIELD, JR., FBI #495 21 C

Information was received April 8, 1968, from the Detroit Division that captioned individual, an extreme racist with a deep hatred for Negroes, and his father, WILLIAM BENFIELD, SR., had left Benton Harbor, Michigan, by automobile during the early morning hours of April 4, 1968, and later returned on April 7, 1968. The purpose of their trip was alleged to be the funeral of BENFIELD, JR.'s brother and it was indicated he had gone to Hayti, Missouri.

The following investigation was conducted by SA WILLIAM R. BURTON at Kennett, Missouri, on April 9, 1968:

The April 4, 1968, edition of the "Daily Dunklin Democrat", the only daily newspaper in Kennett, Missouri, disclosed that funeral services for MAYFORD CLINTON BENFIELD were to be held on Friday, April 5, 1968, at 2:30 p.m. This article stated that MAYFORD CLINTON BENFIELD was the son of WILLARD BENFIELD and GLADYS BENFIELD. Relatives were listed as the mother, residing in Kennett, Missouri; the father, in Benton Harbor, Michigan; a brother, WILLARD BENFIELD, JR., of Benton Harbor, Michigan; a brother, CHARLES R. BENFIELD, of Phoenix, Arizona; and a brother, DONALD L. BENFIELD, of Kennett, Missouri. The pallbearers for the funeral were JOE CHESIRE, BILL BRADSHAW, HERSHEL WAYNE, and three other individuals, all of Kennett, Missouri.

JOE CHESIRE, 1509 Wimberly, employed by the Kennett Outboard Motor Service, and BILL BRADSHAW, 804 Court, owner of the Kennett Outboard Motor Service, advised that WILLARD BENFIELD, SR. and WILLARD BENFIELD, JR. had arrived in Kennett as they best recalled on Tuesday or Wednesday, April 2 or 3, 1968. BRADSHAW was positive he had seen WILLARD BENFIELD, SR. and JR. at the funeral home in Kennett on Thursday evening, April 4, 1968, as well as Friday, April 5, 1968. He believed that they had left Kennett to return to Benton Harbor, Michigan, on Saturday, April 6, 1968.

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1 RE: SUSPECT ROBERT BOSHERS
(Bob Bossier, phonetic)

SL 44-775
JEL/leh On April 24, 1968, the Jackson Division advised of receipt of information that BOB BOSSIER (phonetic) of De Soto, Missouri, might have information concerning RAY.

AT DE SOTO, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by SA JAMES E. LINDSAY:

On April 25, 1968, Mrs. ROBERT BOSHERS, 403 Wine Street, advised that approximately a week ago her husband deserted her and is also believed to have stolen some checks from his employer, JOHN WESLEY ANDERSON, and cashed several of these checks.

She advised BOSHERS is an alcoholic. She also advised that BOSHERS did not mention that he had known JAMES EARL RAY who was identified as the killer of MARTIN LUTHER KING.

She stated BOSHERS has served time at the Federal Penitentiary, El Reno, Oklahoma, and at the Missouri State Penitentiary, Jefferson City, Missouri.

She has no knowledge of his receiving a sentence in the State of Michigan and has no knowledge of his being wanted in that state.

She related BOSHERS has left her on several occasions and been gone for a month or so at a time. She believes he will probably keep going now that he stole the check from his employer.

Chief of Police LLOYD DAVIS, DeSoto, Missouri, Police Department, advised that sometime on the weekend of April 20, 1968, ROBERT BOSHERS cashed two checks both for over $100.00 in the DeSoto, Missouri, area and JOHN ANDERSON claims they were stolen from his checkbook and other checks maybe missing.

Chief DAVIS described BOSHERS as a confirmed alcoholic, that he spent the majority of his time, when not working, drinking.

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He advised he had no record on BOSHERS but understands he did time for cashing stolen Federal money orders or bonds. He believes the state's charges were for forgery.

He advised he would be alert for BOSHERS return.

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HRD/leh

RE: SUSPECT RICHARD L.BREY

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

On May 3, 1968, JOSEPHINE JONES, Clerk, One-Hour Martinizing Cleaners, 5631 Delmar, St. Louis, Missouri, telephonically advised SA PEMBROKE WASHINGTON that a customer had entered the shop on that date who met the description of the subject in this case. She stated he was wearing a dark suit with a white or light blue shirt with a necktie. She stated he gave the name "BREY" and was driving a 1964 Chevrolet, bearing 1968 Missouri license PS0-326.

A license check disclosed that license was issued to RICHARD L. BREY, 1505 West Worley, Columbia, Missouri.

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HRD:paw

Suspects: ANNIE COLEMAN
OLLIE OLTELO

On April 26, 1968, the Bureau furnished a copy of a letter received from ANNA DAWSON, Ellington, Missouri, in which she stated she had seen the slayers of Dr. KING and that they were two women named ANNIE COLEMAN, of Oakland, California, and OLLIE OLTELO, of Overland, California.

AT ELLINGTON, MISSOURI

Mrs. ANNA DAWSON, Ellington, Missouri, was contacted on May 1, 1968, by SA WILLIAM R. BURTON. Mrs. DAWSON stated she had a direct communication with God and He had told her the killers of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING were ANNIE COLEMAN, of Oakland, California, and OLLIE OLTELO, of Overland, California, and that she should notify the FBI. She stated she had never heard of these two individuals before; that she knows nothing of their backgrounds or occupations; and, that she was unable to furnish any additional information concerning them.

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SL: 44-775
HCJ:klr

RE: LOOK ALIKE
JAMES EUGENE GAULT

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent HARRY C. JUNG at St. Louis, Missouri:

On April 17, 1968, the Kansas City Division advised that a check of Missouri driver's license records, Jefferson City, Missouri, disclosed that one JAMES EUGENE GAULT, born [redacted] which is the same date of birth given by suspect ERIC STARVO GALT, has been issued a Missouri driver's license. This individual listed his residence as RFD #2, Box 157a, High Ridge, Missouri, and his employer as G. L. Tarlton General Contracting Company, 5500 West Park Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

On April 17, 1968, JOHN W. HALE, Assistant Office Manager, G. L. Tarlton Contracting Company, advised that JAMES E. GAULT, Social Security number [redacted] residing at the McKinley Hotel, Twelfth and Delmar Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri, was employed intermittently from 1959 to February 1, 1967. HALE stated that he mailed the W-2 form of GAULT for his 1967 earnings to 3476 Macklind Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

On April 17, 1968, Mrs. IRVIN GOZA, 3476 Macklind Avenue, advised that she is the aunt of JAMES EUGENE GAULT. She stated that her nephew moved to Florida in February, 1967, but she did not know his address. She did, however, furnish the address of GAULT's mother, who resides in St. Louis, Missouri. Mrs. GOZA stated that her nephew does not, in any way, resemble photographs of ERIC GALT, which she had previously viewed in local newspapers.

On April 17, 1968, Mrs. FRANK (IDA DOROTHY) DAECH, 6904 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, advised that she is the mother of JAMES EUGENE GAULT. She stated that her son resides in Miami, Florida, and exhibited a letter from him postmarked April 4, 1968, at Miami, bearing a return address of General Delivery, Ludlon Branch, Miami, Florida. Mrs. DAECH stated that her son was not identical with ERIC STARVO GALT, whose photograph has appeared in local newspapers.

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She described her son as follows:

Name	JAMES EUGENE GAULT
Race	White
Sex	Male
Height	6'1"
Weight	155 pounds
Build	Slender
Hair	Dark brown
Eyes	Brown
Complexion	Dark
Date of Birth	
Place of Birth	St. Louis, Missouri
Education	Completed four years high school, Cleveland High School, St. Louis, Missouri
Occupation	Carpenter
Military Service	Served in U. S. Marine Corps, Receiving honorable discharge
Father	JAMES H. GAULT 21165 Hesterides Tampa, Florida.

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SL: 44-775
HRD:jfb

SUSPECT - BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GIBSON

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by SA RICHARD T. HRADSKY:

On April 7, 1968, Mr. ROBERT HODGINS, Sinclair Service Station Operator, 8260 Forsyth Avenue, Clayton, Missouri, who stated he had observed an artist's conception of the killer of Dr. KING in one of the St. Louis newspapers and was of the opinion that the artist's conception resembled BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GIBSON, Imperial Wizard of the Ozark Klan, National Knights of the Klu Klux Klan. He stated that another employee of the service station, JIM (LAST NAME UNKNOWN), of High Ridge, Missouri, was of the opinion he might have rented a car to GIBSON the previous week. HODGINS stated he did not know how to get hold of this employee, as he was off duty but that he would be at work in the service station on Monday, April 8, 1968.

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent JACK A. FRENCH:

Mr. ARTHUR ROWOLD, Maintenance Supervisor, Motor Transportation Leasing Company, St. Louis, Missouri, who resides at 220 Borchester, Belleville, Illinois, telephonically advised that his foreman on the mid-watch at the company, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GIBSON had been at work every day, Monday through Friday, during the previous week (April 1 through April 5, 1968). He stated that GIBSON's normal hours are from 11:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.

Copies of GIBSON's photographs were furnished the Memphis Division on April 7, 1968.

The Identification Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D. C., advised on April 7, 1968, that the remaining unidentified latent fingerprints in this case were not identical with fingerprints of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GIBSON, FBI Number 107 109 C.

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SL: 44-775
JOT:pdp

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

RE: LOOK-ALIKE
INDIVIDUAL ON GREYHOUND BUS
COLUMBUS, OHIO TO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by SA JOHN O. TRETHEWEY, JR.:

The Cincinnati Division advised telephonically and by teletype to the Director, April 19, 1968, that an individual resembling JAMES EARL RAY should be arriving at St. Louis Greyhound Bus Depot at 2:20 p.m. on bus 4472 arriving from Columbus, Ohio, same date.

SAs JOSEPH A. DUBYAK, DEAN R. SHUMWAY and JOHN O. TRETHEWEY, JR. were dispatched to meet bus 4472 at the Greyhound Bus Depot where all passengers alighting from the bus were carefully observed and the interior of the bus immediately inspected. However, no person identifiable with individual described by Cincinnati was observed departing bus or on empty bus. The bus terminal was checked before and after departure of the bus without success.

The only male person on the bus remotely resembling subject's appearance and the description furnished by Cincinnati was CHARLES WARREN HALE, date of birth [redacted] at Anson, Texas, who was en route from Holyoke, Massachusetts, to a Veterans Hospital near Abilene, Texas. However, HALE is definitely not identical to the subject. The driver of bus 4472, WAYNE LESTER WILLIAMS, Greyhound Bus Lines, 801 North Broadway, residence 4508 Northeastern Avenue, Wanamaker, Indiana, advised SA KENNETH N. DELANOY that he drove bus 4472 from Indianapolis to St. Louis arriving at 2:20 p.m. on April 19, 1968. He stated that he had only 12 passengers from Indianapolis to St. Louis, several of whom were Negroes and females, but that he does not know the destination of any of the passengers nor is it normal procedure to check their tickets. WILLIAMS viewed a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY and stated that no one of that description was among his passengers. He did, however, recall one individual who sat in the right front seat of the bus who was about 30 years of age, 5'8" to 5'9" tall, weighing

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150 pounds, who appeared to be intoxicated and who was en route from Massachusetts to Texas. He recalled that he had observed FBI Agents interviewing this individual. He could recall no other person in any way meeting the description in question and did not believe this individual was identical with the subject.

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SL 44-775
JRM/leh

RE: SUSPECT MYRLE HAGGERTT
LOOK-ALIKE

The following investigation was conducted by SA J. ROBERT MEIGS on April 22, 1968:

JOHN MUELLER, owner and operator of the Meramec Motel, 458 South Highway 66, advised that according to his records an individual using the name of MYRLE HAGGERTT, 618 Broadway Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee, registered in cabin number 6 on April 16, 1968. He stated this individual stayed there on the night of April 16 and April 17 and left sometime during the day of April 18, 1968. MUELLER stated that although he did not see HAGGERTT, he understands that he was accompanied by a woman and a small child. MUELLER stated that he understands that MYRLE HAGGERTT is a well known western country star who sings in Nashville, Tennessee, and has made records and radio and television appearances. He stated that he doubts that the individual in cabin number 6 was actually MYRLE HAGGERTT but was probably someone impersonating him.

MUELLER stated that according to the registration card HAGGERTT was driving an automobile bearing Tennessee license plate MG 3013 or MS 3013.

GILBERT MC PEEK advised that he works at the Meramec Motel and also at the eating place located next door. He said that he recalls an individual using the name of MYRLE HAGGERTT registering at the motel on Tuesday, April 16, 1968.

He stated that this individual was driving a 1964 Chevrolet automobile painted dark green which had been hit on one side. He stated that HAGGERTT was accompanied by a woman who claimed to be BONNIE OWENS, who is a singer of western songs and known in Nashville, Tennessee. He stated that he doubts that the individual posing as MYRLE HAGGERTT or the individual posing as BONNIE OWENS were actually the well known singing stars from Nashville, Tennessee.

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He said that HAGGERTT was a white male, about 35-38 years of age, about 5'8½" tall, 180-190 pounds, husky build, blond wavy hair. He stated that the woman who represented herself to be BONNIE OWENS was about 45 and quite heavy. He said he understands that HAGGERTT could play the guitar and sing quite well and did sing one evening at the Red Pony Lounge located about a mile east of the motel on Highway 66. Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY were shown to Mr. MC PEEK and he stated that he does not resemble HAGGERTT in any way.

Mrs. GLADYS MC PEEK, wife of GILBERT MC PEEK, advised she also works at the Meramec Motel and had occasion to see the individual using the name of MYRLE HAGGERTT around the motel and eating place next door on April 16 and April 17, 1968. She stated that HAGGERTT was accompanied by a woman who claimed to be BONNIE OWENS and who appeared to be 40 years old and very heavy. Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY were shown to Mrs. MC PEEK and she stated that he does not resemble the individual using the name of MYRLE HAGGERTT.

NELDA DALTON, waitress at the Red Pony Lounge, 650 South Highway Drive advised that she recalls an individual giving the name of MYRLE HAGGERTT accompanied by a woman who sang and played the guitar at the Red Pony Lounge on the night of April 17, 1968. She said this individual claimed to be MYRLE HAGGERTT who is a well known country western star but she said that she and most of the other individuals in the lounge did not believe that he was actually this individual. She said, however, that he was a very good singer and guitar player and received excellent attention from the people in the lounge. She described HAGGERTT as a white male, around 38-39 years of age, 190 pounds, blond hair, husky build.

Photographs of JAMES EARL RAY were shown to her and she said that she is positive that the individual who sang in the Red Pony Lounge was not identical to RAY.

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SL 44-775
HRD:amb

RE: DONNIE LEON HARDEN, Army Serial Number RA 24 553 268

On April 9, 1968, the Bureau advised the Dallas Division had received an anonymous call from a female to the effect that the subject of this case had Army Serial Number RA 24 553 268 and that Army sources had advised that serial number was assigned to one DONNIE LEON HARDEN.

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

A review on April 10, 1968, of the Army service record for DONNIE LEON HARDEN, Army Serial Number RA 24 553 268, on file at the Military Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri, by IC R. DOUGLAS KING, disclosed that HARDEN had served in the U. S. Army on active duty from May 1, 1958, at Montgomery, Alabama, to honorably discharged from active duty and transferred to the reserves at Oakland, California, March 31, 1961. He thereafter entered on active duty in the Army at Montgomery, Alabama, on May 22, 1963, and served until honorably discharged due to hardship at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, June 4, 1965. Rank at time of discharge was Specialist 4th Grade. He also had inactive service in the Alabama National Guard April 21, 1955, to April 30, 1958, and May 15, 1962, to December 17, 1962. He served in the inactive U. S. Army Reserve from April 1, 1961, to April 30, 1962.

His military occupation was listed as communications center specialist. His civilian occupation was listed as welder, farmer, and musician (singing and guitar).

The files failed to show any courts-martial or absence without official leave but did indicate a reduction in rank in December, 1962, while in the National Guard due to inefficiency. No details appeared.

Top Secret Clearance was granted him on September 30, 1958, based on background investigation completed September 24, 1958, by the Army Security Agency, Third Army Area, Dossier #83008562.

The following description appeared in the files:

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Race	White
Sex	Male
Height	6'2"
Weight	235
Hair	Brown
Eyes	Blue
Born	[redacted] Conecuh County, Alabama
Relatives	VADA HARDEN, nee COLBURN, wife, born 1934, Texas, date and place of marriage not shown; Parents, LEON and ALICE HARDEN, Route C, Evergreen, Alabama; Brother, PAUL SAM HARDEN, Route C, Evergreen, Alabama; Brother, LARRY H. HARDEN, Route C, Evergreen, Alabama; Parents-in-law, SAM and SYBIL COLBURN, 701 Roxella, Houston, Texas
Social Security #	[redacted]
Selective Service	1-18-38-69, registrant of Local Board 18, Evergreen, Alabama
Character references	All Evergreen, Alabama, J. C. JOHNSON, Sheriff's Department; DELMA BOWERS, Southern Coach and Body Company; ROBERT KENDALL, State Senator; WILEY SALTER, State Representative; MABERY COOK, Cook Service Station
Employments	June, 1956, to August, 1956, A. W. Williams Drilling Company, West Virginia Street, Mobile, Alabama, supervisor, SAM HAGERMAN; September, 1956, to November, 1956, Fletcher and King, Andalusia, Alabama, LEELAND FLETCHER, supervisor; November, 1956, to April, 1958, Southern Coach and Body Company, Evergreen, Alabama, supervisor, DELMA BOWERS;

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Employments (continued)

April, 1961, to December, 1961, Southern Coach and Body Company, Evergreen, Alabama;
May, 1962, to August, 1962, Conecuh County Survey Department, Evergreen, Alabama, supervisor, MARLON WILKINS;
September, 1962, to November, 1962, Brown and Root Construction Company, Houston, Texas, PAUL JAMES, supervisor;
November, 1962, to March, 1963, Peden's Iron and Steel Company, Houston, Texas, ARCHIE VERHAGEN, supervisor;
April, 1963, to May, 1963, Southern Coach and Body Company, Evergreen, Alabama, supervisor, CLEVE GARNLY.

Throughout his service his home address is listed as Route C, Evergreen, Alabama. In 1963, an address of 6125 Ridgemont Avenue, Houston, Texas, appeared and his address at the time of final discharge was listed as 701 Roxella, Houston, Texas.

He has blood group "O". He received an Expert's Badge in the M-1 carbine. He had foreign service of one year, eight months, and fifteen days in the Pacific Theater.

A letter from his wife appeared in the files dated April 2, 1965, addressed to Lieutenant General J. L. RICHARDSON, Fort Houston, Texas, which alleged that HARDEN had made false statements in applying for a hardship discharge. She stated HARDEN had indicated he was going to run his father's firm in Evergreen, Alabama, and that she was a nervous wreck worrying about him going overseas -- all of this was untrue. She stated that he had a job waiting for him at Brown and Root Construction Company as a heavy equipment operator. She further stated that he had been a different man since his service in Okinawa as he had beaten her several times and had spent one night in jail when arrested by the Alamo

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Heights Police Department in San Antonio, Texas, for having beaten her. She stated his temper and filthy language were terrible. She stated she had tried to leave him but had been told by him he would kill her and all three of their children if she did. She stated he purchased a rifle and cartridges the following day. She stated he had torn up several pieces of their furniture, half their clothing, broken her watch, and had choked her on several occasions. She further alleged mistreatment of their 15-month-old son.

The files further reflected the statement by HARDEN that his wife had previously suffered a complete nervous breakdown and that she apparently was approaching a similar breakdown at the time of his discharge.

A 1963 photograph of HARDEN appears in the file.

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1

SL 44-775
EMR/leh

RE: SUSPECT DAVID ERNEST HAWKINS

The El Paso Office advised on April 18, 1968, of receipt of information from one Mrs. HARLEY HERRALD that the captioned individual called her on that date from New Orleans, indicating he was in trouble and was coming to see her. She believed he might be implicated in this case.

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

A review on April 18, 1968, at Military Personnel Records Center, disclosed the following, by IC EARL M. RANEY:

DAVID ERNEST HAWKINS, Serial Number 53 004 203, served in the United States Army, January 26, 1951, to September 27, 1957. Honorably discharged by reason of early release of overseas returnee.

Tried and convicted by Summary Court-martial, July 24, 1957, for absence without proper authority. Sentenced to thirty days confinement at hard labor and forfeiture of $50 of pay.

Army records for HAWKINS failed to disclose any treatment for mental or nervous disorders.

No record of specialized training in demolition or explosives was noted.

The following background and descriptive information was contained in the record:

Date of Birth	[redacted]
Place of Birth	Wellborn, Florida
Height	5'10½"
Weight	131 pounds
Hair	Brown
Eyes	Hazel
Addresses	100 West Oakland Boulevard, Oakland Park, Florida, (January, 1951, and October, 1951)

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	Post Office Box 835, Oakland Park, Florida (September, 1957)
Relatives	Father, ERNEST ADAM HAWKINS, same address as above (March, 1955);
	Mother, ENA MC KEITHEN HAWKINS, (deceased - date not shown);
	Sister, JEAN HAWKINS WALTON, Box 118, Oakland Park, Flo-ida, (January, 1951)
Outstanding Characteristics	Wears glasses for astigmatism and near-sightedness
Photograph	None available
Selective Service Number	8-44-29-185
Local Draft Board	#441, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Employment	Gulf Oil Company, Everglades, Florida, as secretary (1947-1951)
Education	Florida Southern College, Lakeland, Florida (1943-(1947), majored in religion
Civilian Occupation	Religious director
Military Occupation	Personnel Management Specialist.

HAWKINS was assigned Headquarters Company 7811 AU SPO 757 (GERMANY) during 1955.

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1
SL: 44-775
HRD:jfb

SUSPECT - THOMAS ROBERT HENDERSON

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent RICHARD BOYD SMITH:

On April 8, 1968, Reverend OLIVER W. GIBSON, Parish Temple, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, 800 North Union, St. Louis, Missouri, advised he had been Master of Ceremonies in a memorial to Dr. KING on that date and following the evening services in his church, at approximately 9:00 p.m., he was told a white man desired to see him. This individual gave his name only as "COLLINS". Reverend GIBSON described him as being 5 feet 8½ inches tall, 155 to 160 pounds, ruddy complexion, blond straight hair, scar on the right cheek and scar on the left hand. He was well dressed in a dark green business suit with a shirt and tie. He wore a watch with a black face on his left hand and there was a ring on his right ring finger with the initial "H."

At the conclusion of the interview the individual admitted to Reverend GIBSON his real name was THOMAS ROBERT HENDERSON. He then told Reverend GIBSON he was not a beggar but a thief and a murderer. He claimed to possess $10,000.00 in counterfeit checks in an attache case he was carrying, together with several credit cards. He claimed he had come to St. Louis from Chicago on the morning of April 7, 1968, but did not indicate the method of his transportation. He stated that he desired to find peace and claimed that he had recently been in Atlant, Georgia, and had met with Dr. KING who had befriended him. He stated he had told KING he had but one year to live due to a brain tumor. He was in possession of a card bearing KING's name and his home and office telephone numbers.

HENDERSON did not so state but gave the impression to GIBSON he was the assassin of KING by stating he had ordered

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someone killed. He wondered if he should turn himself in. He stated he had studied psychology, had been in the military and had won both bronze and silver stars. He admitted to having used narcotics. He wanted GIBSON to help him find peace. He had only $.18 in cash and GIBSON gave him $5.00. He stated he wanted GIBSON to help him and stated he would meet GIBSON at the church at 10:30 on the following morning (April 8, 1968).

He claimed that he was wanted both by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Mafia but stated "they can't catch me."

The files of the St. Louis Division disclose that THOMAS ROBERT HENDERSON, FBI Number 719 320 C, has suicidal tendencies, once was a narcotics user, is a mental case and a drifter and has numerous arrests.

Information was received from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D. C., telephonically on April 8, 1968, that THOMAS ROBERT HENDERSON was not wanted by the FBI.

On April 8, 1968, Reverend GIBSON stated that HENDERSON had failed to keep his appointment with him on that date and that HENDERSON's whereabouts were unknown.

Reverend GIBSON recalled that during the original contact by HENDERSON, HENDERSON had indicated he has always experienced trouble with his parents and that he had first noticed this difficulty at the age of ten when he has sworn at his mother, whose name was PEGGY. He had stated he rebelled against authority. He further claimed to have been in Atlanta, New Orleans, Texas, California, Colorado (where he had relatives) and that he had flown from Chicago to St. Louis. He stated that he had been in jail much of the time.

Reverend GIBSON stated he was confused as to the purpose of HENDERSON's visit and was fearful of being alone with him due to his alleged wanted status. He stated he did not desire to spend more time with HENDERSON due to the late hour and circumstances under which he had been originally contacted. He stated he could only account for the contact by assuming that HENDERSON had been in the crowd at the KING Memorial where the location of GIBSON's

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church was announced. He felt this visitor was the same as THOMAS ROBERT HENDERSON, FBI Number 719 320 C.

On April 9, 1968, the Identification Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D. C., advised that the remaining unidentified latent prints in this case were not identical with the fingerprints of TOMMY ROBERT HENDERSON, FBI Number 719 320 C.

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent EDWARD M. MORELAND:

On April 8, 1968, Reverend CLYDE OSTER, First Baptist Church, 6136 Garfield, Berkeley, Missouri, advised that at 12:55 p.m. on that date he had received a telephone call from a man who had identified himself as PHILLIP BANELLI (phonetic), who advised him he was at Lambert-St. Louis Airport and that he had a serious problem which he desired to discuss with a minister.

Reverend OSTER proceeded to the Airport to counsel BANELLI. He described BANELLI and the story BANELLI gave him the same as THOMAS ROBERT HENDERSON was described by Reverend GIESON, as set out previously herein. At the conclusion of Reverend OSTER's conversation with BANELLI, BANELLI requested that he drive him into St. Louis. Reverend OSTER thereafter drove BANELLI to Ogden and Easton Avenues, where BANELLI left the automobile at 4:30 p.m.

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1
SL: 44-775
HRD:pdp

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

RE: LOOK-ALIKE
ROBERT DEAN JAMES, aka Jesse James, Jr.

On April 11, 1968, the Milwaukee Office advised that information had been received that Mrs. CANNON (ARLENE) MARTIN of Hayti, Missouri, had stated that one JESSE JAMES, JR. of that city had been out of town on April 4, 1968, but had returned on the evening of that date in the possession of a large unknown amount of cash. She had stated that his mother had asked him if he had killed Dr. KING but that he had not replied but had merely smiled.

AT HAYTI, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by SA DOUGLAS ROSENBERGER:

On April 12, 1968, Mrs. ARLENE MARTIN advised that she is employed as a domestic by JESSE JAMES, SR. of Hayti, Missouri. ROBERT DEAN JAMES, sometimes known as JESSE JAMES, JR., is the son of her employer and resides at 26-1481 Netherland Wood, Apartment 5, Memphis, Tennessee, and is employed by the Memphis Light and Gas Company. He is a white male, 5'8" tall, 30 years of age, reddish-brown wavy hair, 160 pounds, stocky build.

He was in Hayti, Missouri, on April 5, 1968, at which time he borrowed $225 from his father in order to put his wife into a Memphis hospital. He was driving a yellow Ford Mustang automobile on this trip.

Mrs. MARTIN stated that she overheard some conversation between ROBERT DEAN JAMES and his mother on April 5, 1968, concerning Dr. KING. She was unable to recall the exact words but stated that Mrs. JAMES jokingly asked her son if he had been the one who killed Dr. KING. She had no reason to believe that ROBERT had anything to do with the assassination.

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1
SL 44-775
HRD:amb

RE: DANCE SCHOOL PROJECT - SUSPECT, AARON ISAAC LOFTON

The Jackson Division telephonically requested review of captioned individual's Army service record on April 15, 1968:

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI:

A review on April 17, 1968, by IC EARL M. RANEY of the Army service record on file at the Military Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri, for AARON ISAAC LOFTON, Army Serial Number RA 24 919 772, disclosed he enlisted in the U. S. Army on January 24, 1955, at Jackson, Mississippi. He was thereafter honorably discharged and transferred in the rank of SP3(T) from the U. S. Regular Army Signal Corps from active service to the U. S. Army Reserve, Mississippi Military District, on November 1, 1957, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D. C. Discharge was at the convenience of the Government. The terminal date of his reserve obligation was shown as February 8, 1962. He was promoted to the rank of SP4(E4) in the U. S. Army Reserve on June 1, 1958. It was further indicated he had previous service of 11 months 15 days in the 154th Infantry Battalion, Mississippi National Guard (no active Federal service). He had one year, 11 months, 21 days foreign service. He received the Sharpshooter Medal for the M-1 rifle and carbine.

His military occupation was listed as Morse interceptor. His civilian occupation was listed as student and interior decorator.

There was no record of courts-martial or absence without official leave.

His residence both at enlistment and discharge was listed as Post Office Box 64, Summit (Pike), Mississippi.

His date and place of birth were listed as [redacted] at Brookhaven, Mississippi.

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A background investigation was completed April 22, 1955, by the Third Army, Dossier #E3005127, and he was granted Top Secret Security Clearance at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, on May 12, 1955.

The following descriptive data appeared in the file:

Race	Caucasian
Sex	Male
Height	5'11"
Weight	145
Hair	Blond
Eyes	Gray (physical examination on enlistment showed right eye hazel and the left eye green, resulting from congenital heterochromic right iris)
Marital status	Single
Selective Service #	22-62-54-282, a registrant of Board #62 at McComb (Pike), Mississippi.

It was indicated he had four years high school and one semester at Southwestern Mississippi Junior College, Summit, Mississippi, majoring in commerce.

His permanent address as of December 13, 1959, was 1164 Ogilvie Drive, Northeast, Atlanta, Georgia.

His parents were listed as AARON ALTON and AGNES NUNNERY LOFTON, Box 64, Summit, Mississippi. Mention was made in the file of a brother but no name was given. At the time of his separation it was noted he suffered a partial deafness, perceptive type, very mild, possibly due to acoustic trauma. He claimed he had suffered from whooping cough, running ears, hayfever, asthma, and frequent indigestion.

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1.
SL44-775
WRB/pjh

RAY LOOK ALIKE

The following investigation was conducted by SA WILLIAM R. BURTON, on May 2, 1968:

AT SENATH, MISSOURI:

After an unsuccessful attempt to contact Mrs. NOLA J. OSBORN on April 29, 1968, she was contacted at her home, Route 2, Box 175, Senath, Missouri, on May 2, 1968.

Mrs. OSBORN advised that the information furnished by her in her letter to J. EDGAR HOOVER, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, contained everything that she could possibly think of in regard to the incident which she related in the letter.

She stated that after arriving at her home in Senath on April 11, 1968, she and her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. GERALD GENTRY, re-hashed the incident and the question of a license plate on the white Cadillac had come up. At that time none of them could remember having noted the license plate and she could think of nothing else concerning this car which would be of any assistance in identifying it. She again stated that the individual she saw driving this car bore a resemblance to the side photograph of JAMES EARL RAY, particularly the hair-line contour. She again stated that the individual was wearing dark glasses. After she and her daughter and son-in-law had pulled off of the highway at the pecan candy store, the Cadillac continued on down the road and once it was out of sight, they continued on their trip and saw it no longer.

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1
SL: 44-775
HRD:jfb

SUSPECT - ROBERT L. PLUNK

On April 11, 1968, the Springfield Office advised that captioned individual was a passenger on Illinois Central Railroad Train Number 6, bound for St. Louis, as of that date and was in the opinion of railroad personnel of an appearance similar to an artist's conception of the assassin of KING. It was indicated that PLUNK was coming to St. Louis to be examined at the Veterans Administration Hospital.

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent HARRY C. JUNG:

Mr. CHARLES LYONS, Deputy Administrator, Veterans Administration Hospital, Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, advised on April 11, 1968, that ROBERT L. PLUNK had been examined as an out-patient and had departed the hospital prior to the time of interview. To the best of his knowledge, PLUNK had returned home.

Mr. LYONS stated that according to records of the Veterans Administration Hospital, PLUNK was born [redacted] at Adamsville, Tennessee, and has served in the United States Air Force, Serial Number 14490053, from March 29, 1954, to January 15, 1955.

He was a patient at the Veterans Administration Hospital in St. Louis from May 27, 1958, to July 1, 1958, receiving tubercular and neuropsychiatric treatment. He was transferred to the Veterans Administration Hospital at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and thereafter to the Veterans Administration Hospital at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on May 6, 1959. His current residence was listed as Route 2, Michie, Tennessee, and, according to Mr. LYONS' best knowledge, PLUNK is still under the supervision of the Veterans Administration Hospital at Murfreesboro.

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1
SL: 44-775
HRD:jfb

SUSPECT - JOSEPH M. PRITCHET

On April 12, 1968, the Washington Field Division advised that PRITCHET had been suggested as a suspect in this case and requested that his Navy records be reviewed.

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following review was conducted by Investigative Clerk EARL M. RANEY:

A review of the United States Navy records on file at the Military Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri, for JOSEPH MALLOY PRITCHETT, Navy Serial Number 540-84-40, on April 13, 1968, disclosed that he enlisted in the United States Navy on November 17, 1959, at Birmingham, Alabama, and served on active duty until August 27, 963, when he was honorably released from active duty as a Radioman, Third Class, at Key West, Florida, and transferred to the United States Naval Reserve where he served inactively until November 16, 1965, when he was honorably discharged.

No record of mental or nervous disorders or specialized training in demolitions or explosives located in the file.

He was given three days confinement on bread and water on July 25, 1961, for being disrespectful toward his Superior Petty Officer.

He was convicted by a Summary Court-martial on August 23, 1961, for being disrespectful toward his Superior Petty Officer and was sentenced to perform hard labor without confinement for thirty days and restricted to his duty station for thirty days and to forfeit $24.00 of his pay.

The records disclose PRITCHETT was arrested June, 1958, for disorderly conduct in Montgomery, Alabama. No further details appeared.

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

The following background appeared in the record:

Date of Birth		[redacted]
Place of Birth		Montgomery, Alabama
Height		5 feet 10 inches
Weight		150 pounds
Race		Caucasian
Hair		Blond
Eyes		Blue
Marks		Mole on left cheek; Tattoo of eagle and flag and "USN" on left forearm
Education		Two years high school
Military Occupation		Radioman
Civilian Occupation		Employed, Howard Johnson Restaurant, South Boulevard, Montgomery, Alabama, under the supervision of Mr. SULLIVAN, June to August, 1959
Addresses		157 Mobile Street (September, 1942, to August, 1948); 252 Wayne Street (August, 1948, to June, 1949); 261 South Boulevard, (June, 1955, to November, 1955), All in Montgomery, Alabama
Relatives	Father	JOSEPH A. PRITCHETT;
	Mother	MARTHA MALLORY, both of 261 South Boulevard, as of November, 1959
References		Mr. W. T. BINION, 1756 South Court Street;

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SL: 44-775

W. E. GLAZINER, in care of Sidney Lanier High School;
C. W. COLLINS, 140 Collinwood Drive, all of Montgomery, Alabama in November, 1959

Social Security Number [redacted]
Photograph None available.

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2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

FD-302 (Rev. 1-25-60)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 23, 1968

1

Mrs. BETTY CRAFE, Clerk, Congress Airport Inn, 3433 North Lindbergh Boulevard, advised that she had never knowingly seen guest JAMES RAY, who occupied Room #114 at the motel as of about 5:08 PM on April 18, 1968; however, during the mid-morning hours on April 19, 1968, she, at the motel switchboard, received an incoming call from an unknown male who asked for RAY and she referred the call to Room #114, the room occupied by RAY.

CRAFE also recalled having recorded two twenty-cent outgoing local calls on the local call slip for RAY's room, however, such calls are not otherwise recorded at the motel and guest JAMES RAY left the motel on April 19, 1968, without settling for such calls.

On 4/20/68 at St. Louis County, Missouri File # SL 44-775

by SA JOHN J. BUCKLEY (A) :paw Date dictated 4/22/68

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2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

FD-302 (Rev. 1-25-60)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 23, 1968

1

WALTER L. BROOKS, Manager, Congress Airport Inn, 3433 North Lindbergh Boulevard, advised as follows.

At 5:08 PM on April 18, 1968, a male guest registered at the motel under the name of "JAMES RAY, Allstate Ins. Co., Columbia, Ill." in a 1967 Plymouth bearing license JE or SE40861. The guest executed a Guest Registration card for either IVA TRACER or SHERYL CARRIGER, clerks on duty at the time.

BROOKS saw this individual, who was assigned to Room #114 at the motel, during the early evening hours of April 18, 1967, when he was in the lobby of the motel. BROOKS did not engage the man in conversation but merely observed him in the lobby and noticed that the man was driving a 1967 green Plymouth, four-door sedan, since BROOKS, upon first observing the car, had believed that a friend of his who drives a similar type car was visiting BROOKS at the motel. BROOKS described the man as a white male, age in late thirties, 5' 10", 160 - 170 pounds, slender build, dark hair, wearing an unrecalled sport shirt, a light sport coat, possibly blue checked, dark trousers, with no tie and no hat.

Upon arriving at the motel at about 10:30 AM on April 19, 1968, BROOKS noted that the 1967 green Plymouth was still parked in front of Room #114, however, at about noon on April 19, 1968, BROOKS noted that the car was gone from that location and it has since been learned that the man who occupied Room #114 on the night of April 18, 1968, left the motel without checking out shortly before 12 Noon on April 19, 1968. Upon registering the man had paid $9.79 in cash, in advance, for the room fee and tax. This transaction is identified as transaction #8018 on the cash machine tape for the motel for April 18, 1968.

Once a guest completes the Guest Registration card, the clerk at the motel then executes a ledger card from the information on the Guest Registration card.

A review of the records of the motel reflected that on April 18, 1968, two local telephone calls were made from Room #114, however, the motel does not record the numbers called since the guest may dial directly from his room.

On 4/20/68 at St. Louis County, Missouri File # SL 44-775

by SA JOHN J. BUCKLEY (A) :paw Date dictated 4/22/68

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2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

Night auditor at the motel, HARVEY MINK, on the morning of April 20, 1968, called BROOKS' attention to the close resemblance between the above-styled motel guest of April 18-19, 1968, and JAMES EARL RAY, whose photograph appeared in the "St. Louis Globe-Democrat" of April 19-20, 1968.

BROOKS reviewed photographs of JAMES EARL RAY, FBI Number 405 492 G, and stated, from his brief contact with guest JAMES RAY on the evening of April 18, 1968, he believed that these were one and the same person.

BROOKS advised that Room #114 was subsequently thoroughly cleaned shortly after noon on April 19, 1968, and has been subsequently rented to another guest.

BROOKS furnished the original Guest Registration card #5737 for JAMES RAY, described above, dated April 18, 1968, for investigative use.

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

FD-302 (Rev. 1-25-60)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 24, 1968

1.

Miss IVA TRACER, Terris Ann Motor Court, Bridgeton, Missouri, who can be reached at telephone number 291-3965, a clerk at the Congress Airport Inn, 3433 North Lindbergh Boulevard, advised as follows:

At about 5:08 PM on April 18, 1968, a white male, age in late 30's, 5'8" to 5'10", 165 pounds, with a short-cut dark hair style, approached the desk and executed motel guest registration card as "JAMES RAY, Allstate Ins. Co., Columbia, Mo." TRACER did not notice the make or model of the car that the guest was driving but it appeared to be a dark green auto, nor did she notice the license plate on the car. The guest was assigned Room #114 and paid $9.79 room fee and tax in advance. It is not recalled whether or not the guest had any luggage.

The guest wore a white shirt, no tie, a light-colored sport coat, dark trousers, and spoke with his head bowed and eyes cast downward.

TRACER viewed photographs of JAMES EARL RAY, FBI #405 942 G, and stated that the photograph of RAY and the appearance of JAMES RAY, the guest in Room #114 at the motel on April 18, 1968, appear to her to be those of the same person.

TRACER did not see RAY again and her fellow clerk, SHERYL CARRIGER, was not in the motel office when the said guest appeared to register.

On 4/20/68 at St. Louis County, Missouri File # SL 44-775

by SA(A) JOHN J. BUCKLEY:bam Date dictated 4/23/68

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2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

FD-302 (Rev. 1-25-60)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 24, 1968

1.

HARVEY MINK, Night Auditor, Congress Airport Inn, 3433 North Lindbergh, advised as follows:

Sometime during the late year 1967, exact date not recalled, a white male registered at the said motel under the name of JAMES RAY, Allstate Insurance Company, St. Louis, Missouri, and left without paying his bill. MINK checked with the Allstate Insurance Company at St. Louis and was unable to identify this man as an employee.

During the night of April 18, 1968, while going through the motel guest list, MINK noticed the name of JAMES RAY as a guest in Room #114 at the motel. He also noted that the said guest in Room #114 had paid $9.79 in advance, but he called Room #114 in an effort to obtain a further room advance, but got no answer to such a call.

MINK noted from the St. Louis Globe-Democrat of April 20-21, 1968, that one JAMES EARL RAY was wanted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and he advised WALTER L. BROOKS, Manager of the motel of the above circumstances regarding the former guest in Room #114.

MINK did not see the guest in Room #114 for April 18, 1968, nor did he see the car that the guest was driving. He could not describe the guest who registered as JAMES RAY, Allstate Insurance Company, St. Louis, Missouri, in late 1967, and who "skipped" on his bill and a search of motel records by MINK failed to locate any such record.

MINK commented that many small "skips" at the motel for one or two nights are charged off, after making a nominal attempt to identify such persons, and the records are destroyed.

On 4/20/68 at St. Louis County, Missouri File # SL 44-775

by SA (A) JOHN J. BUCKLEY:bam Date dictated 4/23/68

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2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

FD-302 (Rev. 1-25-60)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 24, 1968

1.

NAOMI HAWKINS, Housekeeper, Congress Airport Inn, 3433 North Lindbergh, advised that when she came to work on the morning of April 19, 1968, a green colored car was parked in front of motel Room #114. The car bore Missouri license plates, number unknown.

Upon checking the premises later in the day at shortly before Noon, she noticed that the car was gone from in front of Room #114 and the room was vacant so she thereupon cleaned the room for the next tenant.

Nothing unusual was noted in cleaning the room and the only items left were sheets of newspaper from the floor which she threw in the trash can.

On 4/20/68 at St. Louis County, Missouri File # SL 44-775

by SA (A) JOHN J. BUCKLEY:bam Date dictated 4/23/68

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2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

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SL 44-775
JJB:bam

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The following investigation was conducted at St. Louis, Missouri, by SA (A) JOHN J. BUCKLEY on April 20, 1968:

A check of the Missouri State License Directory failed to reflect a listing for SE4- or JE4-0861, it being noted that Missouri licenses contain only six digits, whereas such numbers contain seven digits. Derivations of such numbers, SE4-861, SE4-086 and JE4-860 although listed, had no apparent connection with a JAMES RAY or a 1967 Plymouth.

Miss SHERYL CARRIGER, 2501 Big Bend, a registration clerk at Congress Airport Inn, 3433 North Lindbergh Boulevard, advised that she was not on duty at about 5:08 PM on April 18, 1968, and had no knowingly seen the guest in Room #114 at the motel, nor his automobile, at any time.

Miss MARY LOU BEACHLER, Secretary, Allstate Insurance Company, Claim Department, 9231 West Florissant Avenue, advised that she is a long-time employee of the firm and that the firm has never employed a JAMES RAY as an agent in the St. Louis, Missouri, area. She remarked that the Allstate Insurance Company is represented in Columbia, Missouri, by an unrecalled independent agent at the Sears, Roebuck and Company store at Columbia, Missouri.

Kansas City was requested on April 20, 1968, to conduct logical investigation at Columbia, Missouri, to identify JAMES RAY, Allstate Insurance Company, and the Kansas City Office subsequently advised on April 20, 1968, that investigation at Columbia, Missouri, had failed to identify RAY as an employee of Allstate Insurance Company.

The Bureau advised on April 22, 1968, that comparison of the handwriting on the motel registration in this instance with known specimens of subject's handwriting resulted in the conclusion that subject had not executed the motel registration.

On April 25, 1968, the Bureau advised latent fingerprints developed on above registration card were not identical with the fingerprints of subject.

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

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SL: 44-775
HRD:mjb

SUSPECT - CHARLEY ROBERTS

AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

On April 8, 1968, Mr. GENE CANTARELL, who requested that his identity be kept confidential so far as the individual regarding whom he furnished information might be concerned, of Sikeston, Missouri, telephone #GR1-1801, telephonically advised SA JACK A. FRENCH of the St. Louis Division that he is acquainted with an individual named CHARLEY ROBERTS who lives in Memphis, Tennessee, and is employed at the Firestone Tire Company there. Mr. CANTARELL said he last saw ROBERTS in Sikeston, Missouri, approximately two months ago at which time ROBERTS stated he had recently purchased a 30-6 rifle to kill Doctor KING. He stated ROBERTS was last known to be driving a white Mustang automobile, year unknown.

Mr. CANTARELL was of the opinion that ROBERTS has a prior arrest record with the Memphis, Tennessee, Police Department, for assault.

He had no knowledge or information as to ROBERTS' present whereabouts but described him as being a white male, age 23, medium height and build, light brown hair, green eyes, and having a "silly grin."

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