

Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Asst. Dir.:  
   Admin. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_  
   Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Ident. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Inspection \_\_\_\_\_  
   Intell. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_  
   Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_  
   Training \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

UP-134

R B

ADD 1 KING INVESTIGATION, WASHINGTON (UP-050)

A JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID WEISBERG WAS WRONG IN THINKING HE GOT THE MATERIAL AS A RESULT OF HIS SUIT. HE SAID DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL HAROLD R. TYLER JR. MADE THE DECISION THREE DAYS BEFORE HE HEARD ABOUT THE SUIT.

WEISBERG FILED THE SUIT ON NOV. 28 BUT THE U.S. ATTORNEY DID NOT GET A NOTICE OF THE SUIT UNTIL DEC. 1 AND THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT CRIMINAL DIVISION, ON DEC. 2, THE SPOKESMAN SAID. HE SAID TYLER WAS NOT TOLD UNTIL DEC. 3.

UPI 12-11 05:52 PES

*Memo Belman to Gallagher*

*12-16-75*

*JCL/pwl*

*[Handwritten initials]*

WASHINGTON CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

ENCLOSURE

44-38861-6019

RECEIVED-DIRECTOR  
F. B. I.

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
DEC 12 9 11 AM 1975 F B I  
DEC 15 12 12 PM 1975

RECEIVED  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
DIVISION

DEC 12 11 34 AM '75

RECEIVED  
DEC 12 10 57 AM '75  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

# CBS NEWS

A Division of CBS Inc.  
524 West 57 Street  
New York, New York 10019  
(212) 765-4321

Dear Mr. Wiseman:

December 15, 1975

To confirm our telephone conversation:

What CBS News has been seeking, under the Freedom of Information Act, in addition to the material you have made available to us, includes:

1. Photographs and/or photomicrographs of the test bullets fired from the evidence rifle in the King case.
2. Analyses of the test bullets, comparing them in detail to the murder (evidence) bullet.

As I indicated to you, we have seen the test bullets and filmed them. But our amateur, eyeball examination does not give us the expert information we need.

As I also indicated to you, our ballistics expert, Lowell Bradford, having seen only a photograph of the evidence bullet obtained by Ray's defense attorneys, feels that identification of the bullet as having -- or having not -- come from the evidence rifle -- should be readily possible.

I await your call and your letter in reply.

Sincerely,

*Ernest S. Leiser*

Ernest S. Leiser  
Senior Producer

REC-69

44-38861-6020

EX-116

MAR 2 1976

Mr. Thomas L. Wiseman  
Special Agent, F.B.I.  
Room 5435  
J. Edgar Hoover Building  
Washington, D.C. 20535

cc Mr. Volney Brown, U.S. Department of Justice  
Mr. Allen Shaklan, CBS

55 APR 29 1976

- 1 - Mr. Callahan
- 1 - Mr. Adams
- 1 - Mr. Gallagher

The Attorney General

December 29, 1975

Director, FBI

44-38861-620  
REC-30

- 1 - Mr. O'Connell
- 1 - Mr. Peelman
- 1 - Mr. Lawn
- 1 - Mr. Wannall
- 1 - Mr. Moore

ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Attached is a copy of a letter and envelope with enclosure dated December 15, 1975, received by this Bureau from James Earl Ray.

In his letter, Ray requests that no evidence or potential evidence be destroyed by the FBI or by the Department pending a decision on Ray's appeal before the U. S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

For your information, all physical evidence acquired by this Bureau during the course of this investigation was turned over to Tennessee authorities in October, 1968, pursuant to Departmental instructions received by this Bureau on October 24, 1968.

Receipt of Ray's letter has been acknowledged by this Bureau.

Enclosures (3)

- 1 - The Deputy Attorney General - Enclosures (3)
- 1 - Assistant Attorney General - Enclosures (3)  
Civil Rights Division
- 1 - Assistant Attorney General - Enclosures (3)  
Criminal Division

NOTE: See cover memorandum J. S. Peelman to Mr. Gallagher dated 12/24/75, captioned

- Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_ "MURKIN".
- Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:  
Admin. \_\_\_\_\_ 44-38861
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_ JCL/pwl ) 13 (
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

MAILED 7  
DEC 29 1975  
FBI

*goc*  
*ysl*

*Jm*

*Jm*

*mhw*

84 JAN 15 1976 MAIL ROOM  TELETYPE UNIT

GPO 954-546

8 4 JAN 12 1976

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
FRONT OFFICE

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
FRONT OFFICE

DEC 30 9 28 AM '75

DEC 29 9 24 AM 1975

DEC 29 4 09 PM 1976

DEC 29 4 08 PM '75

RECEIVED  
DEC 29 10 00 AM 1975

F. B. I.  
DEPT. OF JUSTICE

U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE  
FBI

REC'D  
CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW  
F B I

JAN 14 9 22 PM '76  
RECEIVED  
INTELLIGENCE DIV.

RECEIVED  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
INTELLIGENCE DIV.  
JAN 15 10 44 AM 1976

DEC 30

Mr. Clarence M. Kelly  
Director, F.B.I.  
Washington, D.C.

December 15th 1975

re: Ray(def.) v. Tenn., Cr. indictment no.16645,  
Shelby county, Tennessee. (1968)

Dear Sir:

*Murkin*

In reference to the above titled suit, I (the defendant) have been with the assistance of counsel pursuing this matter through the courts (rather than the press & committees) for the past six (6) years attempting to have the plea voided and thereafter receive a jury trial.

However, as of late several press releases have been received here with substantial misgivings, one with reference to your office cited below:

In the December 11th 1975 edition of the Nashville Tennessean newspaper it was reported that in response to a question from United States Senator Barry Goldwater, before a Senate committee on 12/10/75, you implied that..."depending on the Justice Department decision whether to reopen the above suit, certain evidence, eg., FBI tapes & other material pertaining to the Dr. Martin Luther King jr. investagation, would be destroyed", or words to that effect.

Because of the aforementioned implied action by your office, and since unlike the former Director the defendant has not as yet been planted and thus can and still does intend to defend himself before the courts, I would respectfully request (or what ever phrase is legally necessary) that no evidence or potential evidence be destroyed by the FBI or it's parent Justice Department until the courts, rather than the J.D., have made a final determination on the merits of the Habeas Corpus appeal now pending before the United States Sixth circuit court of appeals. See, Ray v. Rose, case no. 73-1545. *38861-10020*

REC-37

17 JAN 8 1976

Further, their should be a final determination in the cr. appeal before the windup of 1976; however, thereafter, apparently under Tennessee case law a defendant can, after the Sup. Ct. denies certiorari if it does herein, file a civil action as a collateral to the cr. action but any legal action with reference to criminal or civil can be concluded within a relatively short period in the evidentiary phase of the proceedings and thus the herein legal request that the Government not destroy any evidence in the matter does not appear to be inconsiderate or inappropriate.

MEMO TO BELMAN TO GALLAGHER  
JCL/PWL 12-24-75

MEMO TO IAG, ENC. 3  
12/29/75 pg. 1  
JCL/PWL 1-2-76  
1-2-76 - ENC. 3  
1-CRIM. DIV. - ENC. 3

*GL*

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
FBI  
DEC 22 1 15 PM 1975

REC'D-CORR & TOURS  
DEC 19 7 36 PM 1975

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
FBI  
JAN 14 '76 4 31 PM 1976

The defendant is also not convinced, contrary to press speculation, that the material in question is in sum salacious in nature as it is inconceivable the Bureau would conduct a protracted investigation looking exclusively for indecorous matter-- and the defendant would expect no evidence be destroyed relieing on such an explanation.

In a related matter, during the Watergate hearings & trials their was considerable vexation in the communications industry and their political go-betweens because of speculation in the same industry that the White House tapes and other potential evidence might be destroyed or altered thus an "obstruction of justice".

Indon't expect the same vexation in the instant matter but I believe the courts did subsequently rule said White House tapes were legitimate evidence and under the same rationale the material your office has implied it would destroy would appear to be "l~~it~~itimate evidence".

Further, Title 28 section 534 of the U.S. code might preclude the destroying of evidence; also, see attached clipping wherein the U.S. court of appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that "full sanctions" would in the future be invoked if the Bureau destroyed evidence which could provide information or leads for cr. defendants.

In summary, I believe the defendant, concurrently with the courts, has a substantial legal standing in this matter having been sentenced to an extended prison term in 1969 under the indictment and until just recently confined under primitive (solitary confinement) conditions and for the Government's agents to be burning potential evidence on the eve of a possible supreme court ruling, or ratifying a lower court ruling, reversing the defendant's conviction because of Fraud would appear to be Actionable.

Concluding, maybe it's custom that some type restraining order be filed with the courts to enforcè the aforementioned request but where the petitioners, as defendant is, indigent the courts customarily put a liberal interpretation on matters of the instant quality.

( a copy of the foregoing letter will be posted to the A.G. for Shelby county, Tennessee, as Tennessee apparently still has jurisdiction in the indictment and interest in the subject matter.

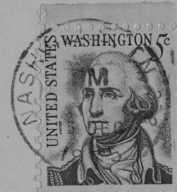
cc: Barry Goldwater, U.S. Senator  
cc: Hugh Stanton jr., Esq. A.G. Shelby ct.Tn.  
cc: defendant's counsel

Sincerely: defendant, James e. Ray #65477  
Station-A  
State prison  
Nashville, Tn. 37203.

*J. Ray*



Ray, J. #65477  
Station-A  
Unit-3/8-1  
Nashville, Tn. 37203.



Ghirlandino: National Gallery  
Christmas US postage

~~CERTIFIED  
No. 070246  
MAIL~~

certified

TO: Mr. Clarence M. Kelly  
Director, Federal Bureau of investagation  
Washington, D.C.

ENCLOSURE

44-38861-6020

# FBI Ordered To Keep Notes

By DAVID PIKE

Washington Star

WASHINGTON — The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been told by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia that its agents here must keep the rough notes they take while interviewing witnesses to a crime.

In an opinion written by Judge J. Skelly Wright, a three-judge panel of the court ruled Monday that such information may later be found by the courts to be helpful to a defendant and therefore relevant to a case.

THE APPEALS court noted that District of Columbia police have been pre-

serving such notes since an appellate court ruling in 1971, but that FBI agents, as a matter of practice, continue to throw away such notes after a report based on them has been prepared.

Wright's opinion said that such behavior by the FBI, in view of various earlier court rulings, was "negligence" but not "bad faith."

The ruling came in the case of three men convicted of the armed robbery of a Washington, D.C., savings and loan in March 1972.

THE APPEALS court upheld the convictions despite destruction of the FBI

notes because, it said, D.C. police had kept their interview notes and because "the evidence of guilt adduced at trial was overwhelming."

However, Wright's opinion said, "full sanctions will be invoked in future cases unless the FBI's practices are modified ...

"The reports contain the agents' narrative account of the witness statement, prepared partly from the rough notes and partly from the agents' recollection of the interview," the court said.

"ALTHOUGH THE agents are trained to include all the pertinent information in the report, there is clearly room

for misunderstanding or outright error whenever there is a transfer of information in this manner."

Outlining the impact of the present practice, the court said:

"Whether or not the prosecution uses the witness at trial, the notes could contain substantive information or leads which would be of use to the defendants on the merits of the case. If the witness does testify, the notes might reveal a discrepancy between his testimony on the stand and his story at a time when the events were fresh in his mind. The discrepancy would obviously be impor-

tant for use in impeaching the witness' credibility."

THE GOVERNMENT had argued that keeping the rough notes would impose "an intolerable administrative burden on the bureau."

But the judges found that the average report was only two pages long, and the notes usually shorter. They concluded that preserving the notes would not create "unsuperable space problems."

The opinion suggested such methods for preserving the agents' notes as reducing documents to microfilm or simply stapling the notes to the report.

## Oil Find Gets In Way Of Digging for Water

SAN ANTONIO, Tex. (AP) — Striking oil is usually a cause for celebration, but to the well-digging crew at the Patio Mexican Foods plant, finding the black gold was little more than an annoyance.

In fact, the crew hit oil, albeit a poor grade, five times before they finally found the water they were drilling for 1,400 feet underground.

"I was beginning to wonder if we'd ever find the water we needed with all that oil getting in the way," said plant manager Ralph Cornwell. "But now we have our own water well and it looks like we may even have a 30-year supply."

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

*PP*

Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Asst. Dir.:

- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laboratory
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

TO : Mr. Jenkins

DATE: 12/24/75

FROM : Mr. J. J. McDermott *JJM*

SUBJECT: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST OF  
ERNEST S. LEISER OF CBS NEWS

### BACKGROUND

By letter dated September 5, 1975, Ernest S. Leiser, a Senior Producer for CBS News, wrote the Director requesting under the FOIA access to some of the laboratory documents and material related to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

By letter dated October 7, 1975, the request was denied (b7A,B) because it involved evidentiary data and James Earl Ray currently had an appeal pending in the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals.

From this denial, CBS, through its attorney Allen Y. Shaklan appealed. United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, interposed a memorandum of objection to the release of any of the requested data, stating such release might have a detrimental effect on the result of the pending appeal and possible re-trial. The Deputy Attorney General decided the documents must be released and so advised CBS by letter dated December 1, 1975. The requested documents were furnished to CBS by letter dated December 2, 1975.

By letter dated December 15, 1975, Leiser requested an explanation as to absence in the released material of information regarding photos, photomicrographs, and analyses of the test bullets comparisons with the death bullet. The Laboratory Division has responded to this request by addendum dated December 22, 1975, indicating the death bullet in this case was too distorted to be of value for microscopic purposes and, therefore, no photographs or photomicrographs were made of the test bullets.

- 1 - Mr. Moore
- 1 - Mr. Cochran

EX-116 REC-69

44-38861-6021X

3-2

4 JAN 9 1976

TLW:meb



5010-108

57 APR 27 1976

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

FOIA

INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
DIVISION

JAN 12 3 57 PM '75

RECEIVED

DEC 29 8 57 AM '75

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

RECEIVED

JAN 20 2 57 PM '76

DEC 24 4 38 PM '75

RECEIVED  
FOIA SECTION

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

JAN 13 10 24 AM '76

RECEIVED  
FILES & COMMUNICATIONS  
DIVISION

Memo to Mr. Jenkins  
RE: Ernest S. Leiser

On December 23, 1975, in response to a telephone inquiry Leiser was informed of the Laboratory response which will be confirmed in writing. Leiser is intending to present on January 2, 1975, on television as part of CBS's "American Assassins," special the Martin Luther King, Jr., murder. It is reasonable to assume that the material provided by the Bureau will be used on this TV presentation. In Mr. Leiser's letter of December 15, 1975, he indicated CBS has employed as a ballistics expert in this Martin Luther King, Jr., matter, Lowell Bradford, who felt that identification of the bullet as having-or having not- come from the evidence rifle-should be readily possible. Laboratory Division personnel question Bradford's "expertise" and point out he has appeared in the past in cases expressing opinions conflicting with Bureau findings.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is anticipated that Leiser's (Bradford's portion) program may be one sided and may not accurately portray the Bureau's procedures and the Laboratory Division may want to personally contact Leiser to explain in detail Laboratory procedures in connection with the examination of the Martin Luther King, Jr., death bullet and rebut, up front, any possible misinterpretations of the FBI Laboratory findings and procedures.

*J*  
*Leiser called 12/29/75; he will talk by phone 1/1/76 with AD Cochran. R*

*mad*  
*gma*  
*if Dept has no objection, ref. a. I. almost 12/29/75 then agree for date to do this*

*J*

VISMESKY  
FRATERS

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

- Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. 105 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 - Mr. Callahan
- 1 - Mr. Adams
- 1 - Mr. Gallagher
- 1 - Mr. O'Connell
- DATE: 12/24/75
- 1 - Mr. Peelman
- 1 - Mr. Lawn
- 1 - Mr. Wannall
- 1 - Mr. Moore

TO : Mr. Gallagher

FROM : J. S. Peelman

SUBJECT: MURKIN

This is the case involving the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., in Memphis, Tennessee, in April, 1968.

Attached for approval is a memorandum to the Attorney General enclosing a copy of a letter and envelope with enclosure which was received by this Bureau from James Earl Ray. This memorandum has been prepared with copies for the Deputy Attorney General, Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Criminal Division and AAG Civil Rights Division in view of the Department's current review of all Bureau files pertaining to Martin Luther King.

In his letter to FBIHQ, Ray advises that he has read that certain evidence gathered by this Bureau in the Martin Luther King investigation may be destroyed. Ray, obviously believing that this material relates to the investigation of the assassination of Dr. King, requests that no evidence be destroyed by this Bureau or by the Department pending Ray's appeal before the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. (All evidence obtained by this Bureau during the investigation of the assassination of Martin Luther King was turned over to Tennessee authorities in October, 1968.)

Enclosed with Ray's letter was a copy of a newspaper article dated 12/11/75, which set out a decision by the U. S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia that Special Agents of the FBI must retain the notes prepared by them during interviews.

On 3/10/69, James Earl Ray entered a plea of guilty to the charge of murder of King and received a 99-year sentence. Federal process against Ray, charging him with violation of Title 18, Section 241, U. S. Code, conspiring to violate the civil rights of Martin Luther King, was dismissed on 12/2/71. REC-30 44-38861-6021  
RECORDED  
17 JAN 8 1976

Ray's letter has been acknowledged by form letter advising Ray that a copy of his communication has been forwarded to the Department of Justice.

ACTION: If approved, the attached memorandum should be forwarded to the Attorney General.

Encls. 44-38861



84

JAN 19 1976

JCL:owl

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



8 4 JAN 1976

RECEIVED

RECEIVED

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
FRONT OFFICE

DEC 29 11 35 AM '75

DEC 24 9 55 AM 1975

LEGAL COUNSEL

DEC 24 9 06 AM 1975

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

RECEIVED

FBI  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

DEC 24 10 01 AM '75

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
FRONT OFFICE

DEC 24 12 38 PM 1975

FBI

U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

JAN 14 4 23 PM 1976

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
FBI

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : Assistant Attorney General  
**Civil Rights Division**

DATE: 1/6/76

FROM : Director, FBI

ATTN: ROBERT A. MURPHY  
ROOM 1038 TODD

SUBJECT: MURKIN  
**ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN  
LUTHER KING, JR.**

Reference is made to \_\_\_\_\_ memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_  
(your file \_\_\_\_\_).

There is enclosed one copy of the report of Special Agent \_\_\_\_\_  
dated \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

A.  This covers the preliminary investigation and no further action concerning a full investigation will be taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

B.  The investigation is continuing and you will be furnished copies of reports as they are received.

C.  The investigation requested by you has now been completed. Unless advised to the contrary no further inquiries will be made by this Bureau.

D.  Pursuant to instructions issued by the Department, no investigation will be conducted in this matter unless specifically directed by the Department.

E.  Please advise whether you desire any further investigation.

F.  This is submitted for your information and you will be advised of further developments.

G.  This is submitted for your information and no further investigation will be conducted unless specifically requested by the Department.

H.  This covers the receipt of a complaint and no further action will be taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

Enc. 1

Enclosed is a copy of a teletype dated 1/5/76  
from our Atlanta Office.

44-38861-

NOT RECORDED

17 JAN 8 1976

FILE  
COPY

[Handwritten signature]

84 JAN 9 1976

NOTE: Reference is made to a conversation between Departmental Attorney Robert A. Murphy and SA H. N. Helterhoff on 1/6/76. Mr. Murphy requested the following investigation re this allegation by Leon Owen Powell:

Interview Claude Powell, Compos and Davis for any information they have re Leon Owen Powell's allegation; obtain artist's conception of Ralph (Last Name Unknown) from Leon Owen Powell; determine present whereabouts including residence and employment of Ray Godfrey. Mr. Murphy stated Godfrey should not be interviewed at this time. Determine all places where Claude Powell reportedly incarcerated to determine if ever incarcerated with James Earl Ray; handle any additional obvious and local leads developed such as the interview of any additional witnesses developed during interview. The CRD will make a determination re providing Leon Owen Powell with polygraph upon completion of above investigation.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

*File  
copy*

TO : Assistant Attorney General  
**CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION**

DATE: **12/30/75**

**ATTENTION: MR. STEVE HORN**

FROM : Director, FBI

SUBJECT: **MURKIN**  
**CIVIL RIGHTS**

Reference is made to \_\_\_\_\_ memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_  
(your file \_\_\_\_\_).

There is enclosed one copy of the report of Special Agent \_\_\_\_\_  
dated \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

A.  This covers the preliminary investigation and no further action concerning  
a full investigation will be taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

B.  The investigation is continuing and you will be furnished copies of  
reports as they are received.

C.  The investigation requested by you has now been completed. Unless  
advised to the contrary no further inquiries will be made by this Bureau.

D.  Pursuant to instructions issued by the Department, no investigation will  
be conducted in this matter unless specifically directed by the Department.

E.  Please advise whether you desire any further investigation.

F.  This is submitted for your information and you will be advised of further  
developments.

G.  This is submitted for your information and no further investigation will  
be conducted unless specifically requested by the Department.

H.  This covers the receipt of a complaint and no further action will be  
taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

Enc. 1

**NOTE: This concerns FOIA request of JOHN LARRY RAY.**

**ENCLOSURE**

*44-38861-*

NOT RECORDED

17 JAN 8 1976

*[Handwritten signature]*

84 JAN 9 1976

NATIONAL PRISON PROJECT  
SUITE 404  
1124 16th N. W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036

December 15, 1975

Dear Mr. Bronstein:

I have been trying to get the F.B.I. to turn over to me my file under the freedom of information act. since July 8, 1975. I expect you know that the F.B.I. only have to complied with the f.o.i.a. under ten days. However, In my case it been six months and I see no relief in sight. I have been giving one excuse after another,

Recently the st. louis post dispatch ran an article in an editorial claiming that the F.B.I. WAS STONEWALLING IT when it came to turning over information under the F.O.I. A.

A few days later the head of the F.B.I. in st louis wrote an answer to this editorial claiming that they was not stonewalling it. I expect you can see by the tactic they are using on me that they are stonewalling it.

One of the reasons they might be stonewalling it in my case is that I'M serving eighteen years in a federal penitentiary for picking up on a highway a person who was found not guilty of robbing a bank. I then found out that agents had theaten my co-defendant from taken the stand at my trial while they legalized an illegal searched of his room with perjury testimony. Solely for the purpose of being able to plant a 'DEAD MAN MONEY' into the trial as evidence. One of these agents was J. Wallace Laprade who recently was sued by Rev. Koen for sending perverted letters to Mr. Koen and his wife. Well Mr. Laprade also entered a lawsuit which I filed against an F.B.I. agent in St. Louis. He gave a sworn affidavit backing up this other agent. I prove it was perjury. the

DEC 24 1975

FOIA

INITIALS ON ORIGINAL

ENCLOSURE

44-38861

Judge however dismissed the suit, I found out later that perjury is permissible in federal court as long as it doesn't come from the defense table.

I appreciate if you can help me get my files from the F.B.I. under the P. O. I. A.

Sincerely,

---

JOHN LARRY RAY 36798  
PMB 1000  
MARION, ILLINOIS 62959

CC. ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH  
CLARENCE KELLY, DIRECTOR OF THE F.B.I.

January 5, 1976

EX-116

REC-69 44-38861-6020X

Mr. Ernest S. Leiser  
CBS News  
524 West 57 Street  
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Leiser:

This is in response to your letter dated December 15, 1975, seeking clarification regarding bullet comparison photomicrographs of the evidence bullet and of test bullets made by our laboratory in connection with the investigation concerning the assassination of the late Martin Luther King, Jr.

By telephone call on December 23, 1975, you were advised by Special Agent Thomas L. Wiseman that the evidence bullet in this case did not bear sufficient microscopic marks of value for identification purposes. Additionally, no photographs or photomicrographs of the test bullets obtained from the evidence rifle were made inasmuch as such photographs would not be taken in situations where it is not possible to effect an identification.

On December 29, 1975, FBI Assistant Director Jay Cochran, Jr., advised you by telephone of the procedures utilized by our laboratory in conducting firearms examinations.

I wish to assure you the FBI is concerned in seeing that the truth is aired. If you have further questions in this matter, our personnel will continue to make every effort to assist you.

Sincerely yours,

C. M. Kelley

Clarence M. Kelley  
Director

- Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

MAILED 6  
JAN 5 1976  
FBI

1 - The Deputy Attorney General - Enclosure  
Attention: Susan M. Hauser

1 - Mr. Cochran  
1 - Mr. Moore  
1 - Mr. Walsh (Enc.)  
(Atten: Mr. Groover)

MAIL ROOM  TELETYPE UNIT

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO.

TLW:meb (8)

56 MAY 04 1976

Handwritten notes and signatures at bottom right.

RECEIVED (3)  
JAN 5 3 26 PM '76  
REC'D  
CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW  
F B I  
JAN 2 1976  
2 0311AM

[Faint, mostly illegible typed text, likely the body of a letter or report.]

REC-68



Mr. Ernest S. Leiser

Note: By our letter dated 12/2/75, CBS was furnished the laboratory information it requested in the Murkin. By letter dated 12/3/75, requester sent full payment for the released documents (\$16.50). By letter dated 12/15/75 requester made further inquiry regarding the released material. The response was coordinated with Laboratory Division. See memo McDermott to Cochran 12/18/75, McDermott to Jenkins 12/24/75 and Cochran to Jenkins 12/29/75.

PLAINTEXT

TELETYPE

URGENT

TO ATLANTA (44-2386)

1 - Mr. Peelman=

1/6/76

FROM DIRECTOR FBI (44-38861)

1 - Mr. Morrissey

1 - Mr. Helterhoff

MURKIN

REATEL JANUARY 5, 1976.

CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION (CRD), U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, REQUESTS THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION TO RESOLVE ALLEGATION MADE BY LEON OWEN POWELL AS SET FORTH IN RETEL.

INTERVIEW CLAUDE POWELL, COMPOS AND DAVIS FOR ANY INFORMATION THEY HAVE RE LEON OWEN POWELL'S ALLEGATION.

OBTAIN ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF RALPH (LAST NAME UNKNOWN) FROM LEON OWEN POWELL. HANDLE THROUGH FACIAL IDENTIFICATION CATALOG AS SET FORTH IN FBI HANDBOOK, PART I, PAGE 21. IMMEDIATELY FACSIMILE RESULTS DIRECTLY TO EXHIBITS SECTION, FBIHQ, AND TELEPHONICALLY DISCUSS ANY PROBLEMS RE ARTIST'S CONCEPTION DIRECTLY WITH EXHIBITS SECTION.

DETERMINE PRESENT WHEREABOUTS INCLUDING RESIDENCE AND EMPLOYMENT OF RAY GODFREY. CRD STATED GODFREY SHOULD NOT BE INTERVIEWED AT THIS TIME.

1 - SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987)

HNH:bap (6)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION PAGE 3... COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

15 JAN 8 1976

JAN 6 1976 509 PM TELETYPE

- Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
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- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

57 JAN 15 1976

MAIL ROOM

TELETYPE UNIT

GPO 934-546

PAGE TWO (44-38861)

DETERMINE ALL PLACES WHERE CLAUDE POWELL REPORTEDLY INCARCERATED TO DETERMINE IF EVER INCARCERATED WITH JAMES EARL RAY.

HANDLE ANY ADDITIONAL OBVIOUS AND LOGICAL LEADS DEVELOPED SUCH AS THE INTERVIEW OF ANY ADDITIONAL WITNESSES DEVELOPED DURING INTERVIEW. IF ANY QUESTION ARISES RE COVERING ANY ADDITIONAL LEAD, PROMPTLY CONTACT FBIHQ.

CRD WILL MAKE A DETERMINATION RE PROVIDING LEON OWEN POWELL WITH POLYGRAPH UPON COMPLETION OF ABOVE INVESTIGATION.

IMMEDIATELY CONDUCT THIS INVESTIGATION AND SUTEL SUMMARY ON A DAILY BASIS UNTIL THIS INVESTIGATION IS COMPLETED. HANDLE ANY LEADS OUT OF YOUR DIVISION BY TELETYPE. HANDLE PURSUANT TO SECTION 27, VOLUME II, MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS. ALSO FURNISH ALL INFORMATION TO MEMPHIS, THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN.

COPY MAILED MEMPHIS.

TELETYPE TO SAC, AT  
RE: MURKIN

NOTE: See Peelman to Gallagher memorandum, same date, same  
caption. The request concerning an artist's conception  
coordinated with Mr. J. F. Morrissey, Exhibits Section.

TELETYPE UNIT  
RECEIVED

JAN 8 1958

JAN 6 4 17 PM '76

RECEIVED  
TELETYPE UNIT

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (100-442610) FROM: SAC, NEW YORK (100-157441) (P)  
SUBJECT: MURKIN; RE: [REDACTED] (NY 100-157441-1000)

NY 100-157441-1000  
NY 100-157441-1000

8 4 JAN 19 1976

"TREAT AS ORIGINAL"

ENCLOSURE

Transmit attached by Facsimile - PLAINTEXT

Priority URGENT

44-38861

To: DIRECTOR, ATT. EXHIBITS SECTION

Date: 1/8/76

From: SAC ATLANTA 44-2386 P

Time: Transmitted -

Subject: MURKIN

Initials -

- Fingerprint Photo
- Fingerprint Record
- Map
- Newspaper clipping
- Photograph
- Artists Conception
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Special handling instructions:

FURNISH COPY OF ARTIST'S CONCEPTION TO:

SUP. H. N. HELTERHOFF, RM 5131 JEN, EL PASO,

MEMPHIS AND  
ATLANTA

Approved: JAMES I. OUNTER  
JIO/B

SI 115

6  
JAN 13 1976

REC-14 44-38861-6008

THELE

# FBI FACIAL IDENTIFICATION FACT SHEET

Only LEGIBLE DUPLICATE COPY Exhibits Section, Administrative Division. **RETAIN ORIGINAL** for your files.)

SUB NO. \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF WITNESS LEON OWEN POWELL

At the beginning of interview a detailed description of unknown subject should be obtained from witness.

SEX M AGE 44-48 RACE W COMPLEXION MEDIUM

HEIGHT 6'2" WEIGHT 200 BUILD STOCKY - MUSCULAR

COLOR OF EYES DARK COLOR OF HAIR DK BROWN - GRAYING TEMPLES

Check items listed below which best represent this description.

<p><b>HEAD</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. oval</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. round</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. triangular</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. long</p> <p><b>EYES</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. bulging</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. squint</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. sunken or deep-set</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5. lids raised</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6. close-set</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7. wide-set</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 8. heavy lid</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 9. overhanging lid</p> <p><b>EYEBROWS</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. thin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. heavy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. meeting</p>	<p><b>D NOSE</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. concave</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. hooked</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. narrow base</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5. snub</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6. downward tip</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7. small</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 8. large</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 9. wide base</p> <p><b>E MOUTH</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. both lips thick</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. both lips thin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. thick upper lip</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5. thick lower lip</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6. thin upper lip</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7. thin lower lip</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 8. large</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 9. small</p>	<p><b>F CHIN</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. jutting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. pointed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. receding</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5. square</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6. double chin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7. cleft or dimple</p> <p><b>G EARS</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. protruding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. close-set</p> <p><b>H CHEEK AND CHEEKBONE</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. average</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. prominent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. sunken cheek</p>	<p><b>J HAIR</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. straight</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. curly or wavy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. kinky</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. balding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5. crew cut or flat-top</p> <p><b>K FACIAL LINES</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. forehead</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. between eyes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. nose to corner of mouth</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. side of face</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5. around eyes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6. chin and neck</p> <p><b>L MUSTACHE</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>M BEARD</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>N POCKMARKS AND SKIN IRREGULARITIES</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
--	--	---	---

Using description noted above, direct the witness to the sections of Facial Identification Catalog which show examples of items checked. Photographs selected by witness from the Catalog as representing a likeness to the features of the unknown subject should be recorded below, using the key number found under each photograph.

<p><b>HEAD</b> <u>KA 1-6</u></p>	<p><b>D NOSE</b> <u>OD 1-30</u></p>	<p><b>H CHEEK AND CHEEKBONE</b> <u>KH 2-5</u></p>	<p><b>L MUSTACHE</b> _____</p>
<p><b>EYES</b> <u>KB 4-1</u></p>	<p><b>E MOUTH</b> <u>KE 1-16</u></p>	<p><b>J HAIR</b> <u>KJ 1-1</u></p>	<p><b>M BEARD</b> _____</p>
<p><b>EYEBROWS</b> <u>KC 3-9</u></p>	<p><b>F CHIN</b> <u>KF 5-8</u></p>	<p><b>K FACIAL LINES</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>N POCKMARKS AND SKIN IRREGULARITIES</b> _____</p>
<p><b>G EARS</b> <u>KG 1-5</u></p>			

Complete description on reverse side of sheet.

TREAT AS ORIGINAL

ENCLOSURE

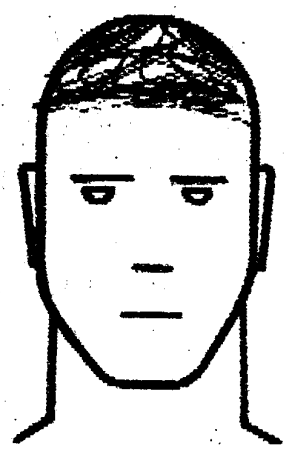
44-38861-6023

Furnish detailed description of hat, glasses, and clothing (from waist up). Include photos or drawings, if possible, from magazines, etc., showing similar items with appropriate comments re any variations from examples.

DARK BLUE SUIT, WHITE SHIRT AND TIE

**ADDITIONAL REMARKS**

VERY NEAT - EXTREMELY WELL DRESSED  
AND GROOMED - LOOKED LIKE "PHILADELPHIA  
LAWYER"



Use drawing of head to mark position of hairline, hat, scar(s), bandage(s), beard, mustache, etc.

WITNESS NO. \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF WITNESS LEON OWEN POWELL DATE 1-7-76

WITNESS TITLE MURKIN

FILE NO. 44-38861 FIELD OFFICE NO. 44-2386 INTERVIEWING AGENT THOMAS J. WILSON

**TREAT AS ORIGINAL**



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

- Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
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- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

TO : Mr. Gallagher *RJG*

DATE: 1/6/76

FROM : J. S. Peelman *JSP*

- 1 - Mr. Callahan
- 1 - Mr. Adams
- 1 - Mr. Gallagher
- 1 - Mr. O'Connell
- 1 - Mr. Peelman
- 1 - Mr. Helterhoff
- 1 - Mr. Moore
- 1 - Mr. Wannall
- 1 - Mr. Walsh
- (Mr. Morrissey)

SUBJECT: MURKIN

PURPOSE: To advise of the institution of investigation to resolve an allegation by Leon Owen Powell that he and his brother were offered payment in 1967 to murder Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

BACKGROUND: This case pertains to the shooting death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on 4/4/68. James Earl Ray pled guilty to this murder and presently is in local confinement.

By teletype dated 1/5/76, our Atlanta Office advised of information furnished by one Leon Owen Powell who, in essence, claims he and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., while in an Atlanta bar in October - November, 1967, were approached by a mutual friend, Ray Godfrey, who asked the Powells if they were interested in making \$50,000. Godfrey told them he would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder King. Approximately one week later at the same bar, the Powells were approached by an individual named Ralph (Last name unknown), who said "I guess you know why I'm here" and subsequently opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000. Powell said they told Ralph they needed time to think it over. Ralph replied "if your mind is not made up now, I can't do business with you." Powell said Ralph never said the money being offered was to kill King. Powell states neither he nor his brother were involved in murder of King.

Leon Owen Powell also stated that the only other individuals aware of this meeting with Ralph (LNU) were his former wife, Annie Lois Compos and Pete Davis, owner of the bar. He stated Compos had no first-hand knowledge, and she is aware of the facts as he described them to her.

HNH:bap (10)

CONTINUED - OVER



84 JAN 21 1976

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

8 JAN 5 1976

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
DIVISION

JAN 8 10 37 AM '76

F. B. I.  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE  
RECEIVED DIRECTOR  
F. B. I.

JAN 7 12 12 PM 1976

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
FRONT OFFICE

JAN 6 3 12 PM 1976

FBI  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
DIVISION

JAN 8 11 52 AM '76

F. B. I.  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

RECEIVED

JAN 6 4 49 PM '76

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS

F. B. I.

JAN 8 2 22 PM 1976

Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

Davis observed Ralph (LNU) enter and exit the bar but had not entered into the conversation. Leon Owen Powell stated the reason he believes he and his brother were contacted by Godfrey is because his brother "Shotgun" served 5 years for armed robbery and had a reputation for being an expert with a shotgun. Leon Owen Powell stated he is willing to take a polygraph in this matter.

DETAILS: On 1/6/76, this matter discussed with Mr. Robert A. Murphy, Chief, Criminal Section, Civil Rights Division (CRD), U. S. Department of Justice and he requested immediate investigation to resolve this allegation. Mr. Murphy requested the following investigation:

Interview Claude Powell, Compos and Davis for any information they have re this allegation by Leon Owen Powell; obtain artist's conception of Ralph (LNU) from Leon Owen Powell; determine present whereabouts, including residence and employment of Godfrey - CRD stated Godfrey should not be interviewed at this time; determine all places where Claude Powell incarcerated to determine if he ever was incarcerated with James Earl Ray and handle any additional obvious and logical leads developed, such as the interview of any additional witnesses developed during interview. CRD will make a determination whether Leon Owen Powell should be given a polygraph examination upon the completion of the above investigation. This request from Mr. Murphy has been confirmed in writing.

Atlanta has been advised by separate communication to conduct this investigation immediately.

ACTION: For information. You will be advised of any pertinent developments.

*EO m*  
*JK*  
*JK*  
*JK*  
*JK*  
*JK*  
*JK*  
*JK*

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Asst. Dir.:

- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
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- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

TO : Mr. Gallagher *Gly*

DATE: 1/14/76

FROM : J. S. Peelman *JS*

- 1 - Mr. Callahan
  - 1 - Mr. Adams
  - 1 - Mr. Gallagher
  - 1 - Mr. O'Connell
  - 1 - Mr. Peelman
  - 1 - Mr. Helterhoff
  - 1 - Mr. Moore
  - 1 - Mr. Wannall
  - 1 - Mr. Walsh
  - 1 - Mr. Cochran
- (Attn: Mr. Balog)

SUBJECT: MURKIN

PURPOSE: To advise of the status of the investigation instituted to resolve an allegation by Leon Owen Powell that he and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., were offered payment in 1967 to murder Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. *JS*

BACKGROUND: This case pertains to the shooting death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on 4/4/68. James Earl Ray pled guilty to this murder and presently is in local confinement. *JS*

You were previously advised in a J. S. Peelman memorandum to Mr. Gallagher, dated 1/6/76, that by teletype dated 1/5/76, our Atlanta Office advised of information furnished by one Leon Owen Powell who, in essence, claims he and his brother, Claude Powell, Jr., while in an Atlanta bar in October - November, 1967, were approached by a mutual friend, Ray Godfrey, who asked the Powells if they were interested in making \$50,000. Godfrey told them he would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder King. Approximately one week later at the same bar, the Powells were approached by an individual named Ralph (Last name unknown), who said "I guess you know why I'm here" and subsequently opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000. Powell said they told Ralph they needed time to think it over. Ralph replied "if your mind is not made up now, I can't do business with you." Powell said Ralph never said the money being offered was to kill King. Powell states neither he nor his brother were involved in the murder of King. *JS*

44-38861

REC-100

44-38861-6025

5 JAN 19 1976

HNH:bap (11)

CONTINUED - OVER



8 JAN 21 1976

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

8 4 10 N S T 1038

RECEIVED GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION 5030 J.E.H.  
RECEIVED FEDERAL INVESTIGATIVE FRONT OFFICE

JAN 16 7 15 AM '76  
JAN 14 1 04 PM 1976

RECEIVED

JAN 15 12 46 PM '76

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
FBI

JAN 16 9 47 AM 1976

F. B. I.  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE  
FBI  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher  
RE: MURKIN

Leon Owen Powell also stated that the only other individuals aware of this meeting with Ralph (LNU) were his former wife, Annie Lois Compos and Pete Davis, owner of the bar.

The Civil Rights Division (CRD), U. S. Department of Justice, requested investigation to resolve this allegation.

DETAILS: Claude Powell, Jr., was interviewed and although he also claims a payment offer was made to kill King, his account differs somewhat from that of Leon Owen Powell. Claude Powell, Jr., states that three or four weeks prior to the murder of King, he and his brother, Leon, were seated in a booth in Pete's Bar in Atlanta. Ray Godfrey, a friend of Leon's, joined them in their booth and engaged in conversation with Leon. Claude paid no particular attention to what they were talking about. Godfrey then left the booth and approximately ten to fifteen minutes later, an unknown subject (unsub), a white male, joined them in their booth and placed an expensive-looking briefcase on the table. The unsub told them he wanted them to kill King and would pay \$25,000 now and \$25,000 when the job was done. The unsub then opened his briefcase, which was full of wrapped currency. Claude stated he was shocked, assumed it was some sort of a joke and he ignored the unsub. The unsub then closed his briefcase and departed.

Wendell Sutton Powell, a brother, stated he had not heard of anyone contacting his brothers re offering them money to assassinate King. He advised if Claude had seen \$25,000 in one lump sum, Claude would have told others about it. He advised that Claude used to drink a lot and talk glibly when in a drunken condition.

Leon Owen Powell has furnished information for the preparation of an artist's conception of the unsub who reportedly made the payment offer. Claude Powell, Jr., states he would not recognize the unsub and was unable to furnish information for an artist's conception.

Annie Lois Compos, former wife of Leon Owen Powell, after some prompting, remembered an incident wherein Leon told her an individual had contacted his brother and him regarding the murder of King. Leon told her that the man had a suitcase

Memorandum to Mr. Gallagher

RE: MURKIN

full of money and wanted them to murder King. She stated Leon was very intoxicated when relating the story to her after the King assassination. She stated that numerous times while Leon was drunk, he would talk about various killings and killers.

Investigation determined that Pete Davis, the owner and operator of the bar, died of cancer in May of 1975.

Ray Godfrey has been fully identified as Arnold Ray Godfrey and has advised that he did not talk with either of the Powells re the assassination of King nor did he introduce anyone to them re the assassination of King. He denied all knowledge of any assassination plot re King.

The results of our investigation have been closely coordinated with the CRD and on 1/14/76, Mr. Robert A. Murphy, Chief, Criminal Section, CRD, requested that polygraph examinations be afforded to Leon Owen Powell, Claude Powell, Jr., and Arnold Ray Godfrey, in an attempt to further resolve this matter. This request from Mr. Murphy has been confirmed in writing.

By separate communication, Atlanta is being instructed to have SA John B. Reynolds, Bureau-approved polygraph examiner, afford the requested polygraph examinations to Leon Owen Powell and Arnold Ray Godfrey. SA Loren K. Lee, Bureau-approved polygraph examiner, San Antonio Division, is also being instructed to afford the requested polygraph examination to Claude Powell, Jr., presently in the El Paso Division, since our El Paso Office does not have a Bureau-approved polygraph examiner. This coordinated with Laboratory Division.

ACTION: For information. You will be advised of any pertinent developments.

RA  
EB m

J

JH

J

JEO  
h

JBR  
PLM

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 08 1976

TELETYPE

Assoc. Dir.	_____
Dep.-A.D.-Adm.	_____
Dep.-A.D.-Inv.	_____
Asst. Dir.:	
Admin.	_____
Comp. Syst.	_____
Ext. Affairs	_____
Files & Com.	_____
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Laboratory	_____
Plan. & Eval.	_____
Spec. Inv.	_____
Training	_____
Legal Coun.	_____
Telephone Rm.	_____
Director Sec'y	_____

NR006 CE PLAIN

6:30PM NITEL JANUARY 8, 1976 JDC

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

ATLANTA (44-2386)

EL PASO

MEMPHIS

FROM: CHARLOTTE (44-1365)

MURKIN

RE ATLANTA TELETYPE TO THE DIRECTOR, DATED JANUARY 7, 1976.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., AND MECKLENBURG COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT.

RECORDS REFLECT CLAUDE DOWELL, JR., BELMONT, N. C., WAS SENTENCED MAY 16, 1949, FOR ARMED ROBBERY TO FIVE TO TEN YEARS IN THE N. C. STATE PENITENTIARY, RALEIGH, N. C. ON MAY 22, 1953, POWELL ARRESTED LOCALLY FOR FAILURE TO STOP AT INTERSECTION.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY CLERK OF COURT RECORDS REFLECT WENDELL SUTTON POWELL BORN [REDACTED] ARRESTED AND SENTENCED AT SAME TIME TO SAME TERM AS CLAUDE POWELL ON ARMED ROBBERY CHARGE.

WENDELL SUTTON POWELL, POSSIBLY A BROTHER OF CLAUDE, HAS SEVERAL OTHER ARRESTS FOR OPERATING A VEHICLE WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE AND PUBLIC DRUNK, LAST BEING ARRESTED MARCH 17, 1974, FOR PUBLIC DRUNK. WENDELL SUTTON POWELL RESIDED 218 EWING DRIVE, BELMONT, N. C., AT THAT TIME.

P11

84 JAN 21 1976



8 3 1419

RECEIVED  
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
DIVISION 5030 J.E.H.

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
FBI

JAN 8 7 44 PM '76

JAN 9 6 44 AM 1976

F. B. I.  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

[Faint, mostly illegible typed text, possibly a memorandum or report body]

[Faint, mostly illegible text, possibly a list or distribution list]

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PAGE TWO CE 44-1365

NO RECORD LOCATED RE BROTHER LEON OWEN POWELL.

ABOVE BEING SET FORTH FOR EL PASO FOR INFORMATION AS  
EL PASO HAS LEAD TO INTERVIEW CLAUDE POWELL, JR.

CHARLOTTE, AT BELMONT, N. C., WILL LOCATE AND INTERVIEW  
WENDELL POWELL TO DETERMINE WENDELL POWELL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH  
CLAUDE AND LEON POWELL AND IF HE IS ACQUAINTED WITH ALLEGED  
MURDER PLOT.

END.

HOLD

JAN 06 6 34 PM '76

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TELETYPE UNIT

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JAN 10 1976  
TELETYPE

Assoc. Dir.	_____
Dep.-A.D.-Adm.	_____
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Asst. Dir.:	
Admin.	_____
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Ext. Affairs	_____
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Plan. & Eval.	_____
Spec. Inv.	_____
Training	_____
Legal Coun.	_____
Telephone Rm.	_____
Director Sec'y	_____

*Reckman  
a n...*

NR010 AT PLAIN

4:37 PM URGENT 1-8-76 HLF

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

EL PASO

MEMPHIS (AM)

FROM: ATLANTA (44-2386) (P)

MURKIN.

RE EL PASO TEL TO BUREAU, JANUARY 7, 1976; ATLANTA TEL TO DIRECTOR, JANUARY 7, 1976; AND BUREAU TEL CALL TO ATLANTA, JANUARY 8, 1976.

ON JANUARY 7, 1976, LEON OWEN POWELL RECONTACTED AND ADVISED HE WOULD "STICK BY HIS STORY". ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF RALPH (LNU) OBTAINED FROM LEON POWELL AND SENT TO EXHIBITS SECTION, VIA SEPARATE COMMUNICATION. POWELL ADVISED HIS BROTHER LOCATED IN ROOM 210 OF SCOTTISH INN, MIDLAND, TEXAS AND EMPLOYED THERE BY UNIDENTIFIED HOME BUILDER DOING EITHER CARPENTRY OR DRYWALL WORK.

ON JANUARY 7, 1976, ANNIE LOIS POWELL CAMPOS, WHITE FEMALE, DATE OF BIRTH [REDACTED] WAS CONTACTED AND ADVISED SHE HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY MARRIED TO LEON OWEN POWELL FROM 1955 UNTIL 1975. AFTER SOME PROMPTING, SHE REMEMBERED THE INCIDENT WHEREBY HER EX-HUSBAND, LEON POWELL, RELATED TO HER AN INDIVIDUAL HAD CONTACTED  
END PAGE ONE.

*ANNIE LOIS POWELL*  
*44-38861-6071*  
REC-51  
5 JAN 20 1976  
*0-70813*  
*2600*  
*11276*  
*1/21/76*

P11

84 JAN 21 1976

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GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE  
DIVISION 5030 J.E.H.

JAN 8 5 42 PM '76

F. B. I.  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

REC'D-CIV RIGHTS  
FBI

JAN 9 6 45 AM 1976

RE: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block containing several paragraphs of a memorandum or report, including dates like 1/8/76 and 1/9/76, and names like GEORGE BOWEN.]

TO: DIRECTOR (44-38861)

FROM: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block]

PAGE TWO (44-2386)

HIS BROTHER AND HIM REGARDING MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. POWELL TOLD HER THAT MAN HAD A SUITCASE FULL OF MONEY AND WANTED HE AND HIS BROTHER, CLAUDE, TO MURDER KING. POWELL WAS VERY INTOXICATED WHEN RELATING THIS STORY TO HER. SHE SPECIFICALLY REMEMBERS HE RELATED THIS TO HER AFTER THE KING ASSASSINATION. HER EX-HUSBAND WAS CONSTANTLY GETTING DRUNK AND SPENDING ALL HIS PAY CHECK ON BOOZE. NUMEROUS TIMES SHE HAD TO PULL HIM OUT OF A BAR BEFORE HE SPENT ALL HIS MONEY SO THERE WOULD BE ENOUGH LEFT TO BUY GROCERIES. NUMEROUS TIMES, WHILE HE WAS DRUNK, HER EX-HUSBAND WOULD TALK ABOUT VARIOUS KILINGS AND KILLERS. SHE THOUGHT THIS WAS MOSTLY THE LIQUOR TALKING; HOWEVER, IF HE STUCK BY HIS STORY WHEN HE WAS SOBER, SHE WOULD ATTRIBUTE SOME VALIDITY TO HIS TALE. SHE COULD NOT SUPPLY ANY FURTHER INFORMATION.

ON JANUARY 8, 1976, BOBBY JOHNSON, RADIO STATION, WPLO COUNTRY AND WESTERN MUSIC STATION, ADVISED THERE HAD BEEN A COUNTRY AND WESTERN SINGER BY THE NAME OF RAY GODFREY IN 1967 OR 1968. THIS SINGER WAS HANDLED LOCALLY BY LOWERY MUSIC COMPANY, ATLANTA, GEORGIA. ON JANUARY 8, 1975, MARY TALLENT,  
END PAGE TWO.

PAGE THREE (44-2386)

SECRETARY TO PRESIDENT, LOWERY MUSIC COMPANY, ADVISED IN 1967 HER FIRM HANDLED COUNTRY AND WESTERN SINGER BY NAME OF RAY GODFREY. GODFREY WOULD, AT THIS TIME, BE APPROXIMATELY FORTY-FIVE TO FIFTY YEARS OF AGE AND IS A WHITE MALE. SHE DESCRIBED GODFREY AS REAL "COUNTY" FELLOW. SHE REFUSED TO BELIEVE GODFREY COULD BE IN ANY TROUBLE WHATSOEVER. NATURE OF ATLANTA'S INQUIRY NOT RELATED TO HER. SHE STATED GODFREY WORKED FOR ATLANTA WATER DEPARTMENT WITH TELEPHONE NUMBER 622-1481 AS WORK PHONE. SHE ALSO ADVISED RECORDS REFLECT GODFREY HAD SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER  SHE ALSO FURNISHED NEGATIVE OF PHOTOGRAPH OF RAY GODFREY.

P11

TELEPHONE NUMBER 622-1481 IS LISTED TO ATLANTA CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND STREETS. MRS. L. S. PENNINGTON, DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL, CITY OF ATLANTA, RECONTACTED AND ADVISED THAT PAT SOJKA, SUPERVISOR, SEWER REPAIR DIVISION, WOULD BE PERSON TO CONTACT RE ANYONE EMPLOYED AT TELEPHONE NUMBER 622-1481.

PAT SOJKA ADVISED CITY OF ATLANTA DOES HAVE AN EMPLOYEE NAMED RAY GODFREY, EMPLOYED AS A SEWER SERVICE FOREMAN. GODFREY IS KNOWN TO BE A COUNTRY AND WESTERN SINGER. RAY GODFREY IS NOT  
END PAGE THYREE.

PAGE FOUR (44-2386)

HIS COMPLETE NAME, HOWEVER. *also Ray Godfrey* CURRENT RECORDS OF SEWER DEPARTMENT REFLECT TRUE NAME AS A. R. ~~GODFREY~~, LIVING AT 1105 LAKESHORE DRIVE, JONESBORO, GEORGIA, TELEPHONE 477-5036. *ARNOLD Godfrey, ARNOLD Ray (Ray now Godfrey)*

IN ORDER TO CLARIFY INFO RE PETE DAVIS IN ATLANTA TELETYPE TO THE BUREAU, JANUARY 7, 1976, IT IS TO BE NOTED DOROTHY DAVIS ADVISED HER HUSBAND, PETE DAVIS, OWNED AND OPERATED BAR KNOWN AS "PETE'S PLACE" ON MORELAND AVENUE JUST SOUTH OF INTERSECTION OF CONFEDERATE AND MORELAND AND THAT HER HUSBAND DIED IN MAY, 1975 OF NATURAL CAUSES, NAMELY CANCER.

ON JANUARY 8, 1976, AT 3370-CI ADVISED TELEPHONE NUMBER 477-5036 SUBSCRIBED TO BY ARNOLD GODFREY, ORIGINALLY CONNECTED APRIL, 1961 AND TRANSFERRED TO ABOVE ADDRESS OCTOBER, 1974. UP TO 1970, EMPLOYED BY CITY OF ATLANTA CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT, NO UP-DATE AVAILABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT SINCE. IT WOULD APPEAR GODFREY'S NAME IS ARNOLD RAY OR RAYMOND GODFREY.

ATLANTA CONDUCTED ALL INVESTIGATION REQUESTED BY CIVIL RIGHTS DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, IS KEEPING CASE IN PENDING STATUS IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT CHARLOTTE AND EL PASO HAVE OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATION.

END PAGE FOUR.



PAGE FIVE (44-2386)

POWELL BROTHERS, LEON AND CLAUDE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED  
POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.

END.

PLS HOLD

JAN 04 4 58 PM '76

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TELETYPE UNIT

END  
M. HOD

POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS

ROBERT BROTHERS, LEON AND CIVIL, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED  
BLUE BIRD (VF-0380)