

KC 44-760

ADMINISTRATIVE:

The information included in this report is not the complete results of investigation covered during this period by the Kansas City Office in connection with this matter. It only contains the Wichita Beacon Newspaper articles and investigation requested in referenced communication.

3*
(COVER PAGE)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of: RAYMOND B. HOWE
Date: 12/13/68

Office: Kansas City

Field Office File No.: 44-760

Bureau File No.: 44-38861

Title: JAMES EARL RAY;
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
(DECEASED) - VICTIM

"One man sitting in a Memphis, Tenn., jail cell knows only too well what kind of an expert George Bonebrake is.

"James Earl Ray, awaiting trial as the accused assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King last spring, is in that cell largely through the efforts of Bonebrake.

"Bonebrake, one of the FBI's most respected fingerprint experts, is in Wichita conducting a seminar on fingerprint identification for area law enforcement agencies.

"Following the assassination of Dr. King, Bonebrake led the search through thousands of fingerprints on file at the Washington, D.C., FBI headquarters for the identification of the killer.

"After Ray was arrested earlier this summer in London, England, Bonebrake was the government's star witness in the extradition proceedings that followed. And it was his expert testimony that identified the man

KC 44-760

"Bonebrake picked up a large chart showing side-by-side blow-ups of two fingerprints. 'This one,' he pointed to a blurred photo of a fingerprint, 'is a latent print, or one which was found at a crime scene. The other is an ink print, one taken from a suspect when he was arrested.

"When I am called to testify in court, I point out to the jury how the two are identical.

"This is what I did in London. I was able to show that the latent prints obtained in Memphis, the ones taken in London and the ones taken of Ray at the Missouri prison were all the same.'

"Bonebrake said FBI agents obtained 'good' latent prints from a rifle believed used to kill Dr. King, from a telescopic sight on the rifle and from a pair of binoculars found at the scene.

KC 44-760

"During the week-long seminar here, Bonebrake is instructing lawmen from several South Central Kansas police and sheriff's departments on the proper identification of latent prints.

"The class is designed to teach officers to go to a crime scene and develop the crime scene or latent prints using various processes.

"Wednesday, the law officers compared latent prints found at a prepared crime scene with those of known offenders and established identifications. Today, they were instructed on the means of preparing that evidence for trial. Friday they will present the evidence during a mock trial"

On October 16, 1968, the following story under the heading "Beacon Story Ignites Ray Trial Controversy" appeared in the Wichita Beacon Newspaper. This article was also written by BERNIE WARD and states as follows:

" On Sept. 30, Hanes, private detective Renfro Hays, hired by the defense, and two Memphis reporters, Roy Hamilton of the Memphis Press - Scimitar and Charles Edmundson of the Commercial Appeal were cited for contempt of court for trial-related statements made outside of court.

"W. Preston Battle, criminal court judge in Tennessee's Shelby County, issued the contempt citations.

"The contempt findings came after complaints Hanes and Hays had voiced about the unusually strict guard placed on Ray. The two newsman reported the complaints in their Memphis papers.

"Hanes had complained the strict security surrounding his client had threatened Ray's sanity and called the security measures 'cruel and unusual punishment.'

"At that time, Bonebrake told a Beacon reporter he had testified at the Ray extradition hearing that 'the latent fingerprints we found in Memphis matched those taken of the man arrested in London and that the same prints matched those taken of James Earl Ray while he was at the Missouri penitentiary.

"Therefore, my testimony tended to implicate him in the murder of Dr. King as well as identify him as the fugitive wanted for escaping from the Missouri prison."

"Bonebrake also stated that FBI agents had obtained 'good' latent prints from a rifle believed used to kill Dr. King, from a telescopic sight on the rifle and from a pair of binoculars all found abandoned near the Memphis crime scene.

"In the Commercial Appeal Store, Hanes referred to Bonebrake's statements as an example of how Judge Battle's or limiting pre-trial publicity has different effects on the defense

KC 44-760

On October 24, 1968, Judge W. PRESTON BATTLE, Criminal Court of Shelby County, Memphis, Tennessee, signed a petition requiring that Examiner BONEBRAKE appear before that court on December 6, 1968, to show cause why he should not be held in contempt of court. This action was taken in connection with an article appearing in the Wichita, Kansas, Beacon Newspaper concerning a police school conducted by Mr. BONEBRAKE September 9 - 13, 1968, at Wichita, Kansas.

KC 44-760

2

at its contents and without checking the accuracy of the facts expressed his displeasure to WARD on the day after publication. BEVIS observed that WARD was invited to do an article on the school, not on the background of the instructor or the RAY case. WARD'S only comment was, "Well that's news."

KC 44-760

2

HERRON volunteered he had read the article appearing in the Wichita Beacon of about September 12, 1968, and he did not hear BONEBRAKE or a member of the fingerprint class mention such facts to the press.

KC 44-760

2

newsman would have been able to obtain as detailed facts
as appeared to be quoted in the article.

Optional Form No. 10

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO : ALL SPECIAL AGENTS

DATE: 12/24/68

FROM *LD* SAC (44-760)

NO. 68-179

SUBJECT: MURKIN
COST DATA

Each Agent is requested to submit to SA

Optional Form No. 10

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO : ALL SPECIAL AGENTS

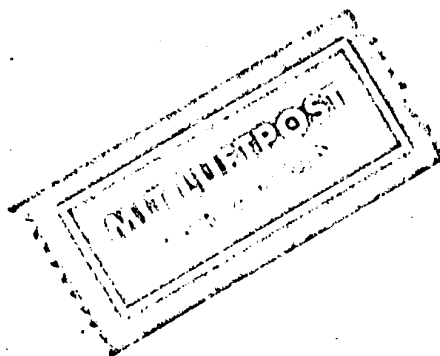
DATE: 12/24/68

FROM *W* SAC (44-760)

NO. 68-179

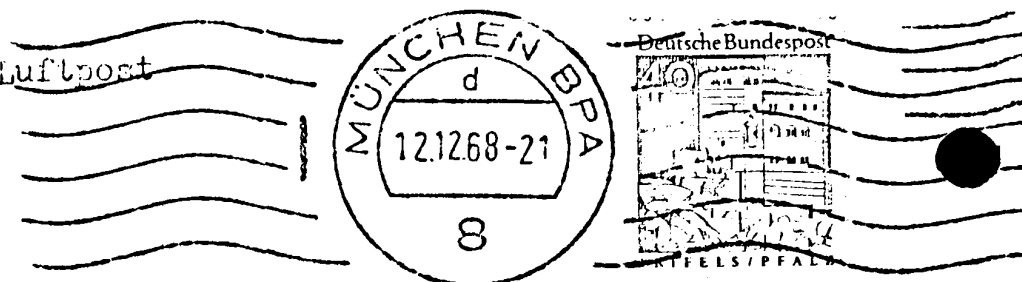
SUBJECT: MURKIN
COST DATA

Each Agent



Drucksache/Luftpost

Warden Harold B. Swenson
Missouri State Penitentiary
Jefferson City, Mo.



U.S.A.

Personal

44-760-1266

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 10 1969	
FBI - KANSAS CITY	

Fletcher

