

U. S. Department of Justice

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FEDERAL BUREAU

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"DO NOT DESTROY:
HISTORICAL VALUE,
NATIONAL ARCHIVES"

FOIPA REQUEST INVESTIGATION

Do Not Destroy Prior to _____
(190-ME-51602)

Ser. 839, p. 491, 10-28-77
" 838 p. 491, 10-28-77
" 841 p. 491, 10-28-77
Bureau File Number

Do Not Destroy
Pending Litigation
HISTORICAL VALUE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES"

See also Nos.

SEE VOL 1
FOR LITIGATION

4/2/10 Cg
B. Johnson 8-1-77
Hester

COMMITTEE

(8/15/77)

CLASSIFICATION IN 44-1987 Serial 1140
7-14-77
Type sent to Bureau
Serial 1140
Volume Number 1140
Set 1-1212
Vol. 12

A

X

AIRTEL

7/14/77

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, LOUISVILLE (44-947) (RUC)
SUBJECT: MURKIN 44-1987

Re Louisville airtel to Bureau dated 6/27/77.

On 6/30/77, HURSTLE SLAVEN, Postmaster, Marshes Siding, McCreary County, Kentucky, stated that there are no Black families residing in Marshes Siding. He was displayed the writing on the envelope which was sent to WATE-TV, Knoxville, Tennessee and advised he is not familiar with that handwriting.

On 6/30/77, RAYMOND STRUNK, owner, Strunk's Grocery, Marshes Siding, Kentucky, stated that there are no Black families living in Marshes Siding and he has no Black customers. It should be noted that Strunk's Grocery is adjacent to the Marshes Siding Post Office.

On 6/30/77, Captain J. W. STRUNK, McCreary County Police, Whitley City, Kentucky, was contacted and stated there are no Black families residing in McCreary County, Kentucky, or Marshes Siding, Kentucky.

Since investigation has failed to disclose any Black man or family residing in Marshes Siding, McCreary County, Kentucky, no further investigation will be conducted by Louisville.

2 - Bureau
1 - Knoxville (44-696)
① - Memphis
1 - Louisville
RWM/scs
(5)

44-1987-Sub M-1140

SEARCHED <i>JS</i>	INDEXED <i>JS</i>
SERIALIZED <i>JS</i>	FILED <i>JS</i>
JUL 10 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

B. Johnson

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Closed Hearing In Ray Escape Case Sought

By MARSHA VANDE BERG

Brusby Mountain Prison Warden Stonney Lane said yesterday he will seek to close a court proceeding involving James Earl Ray today "unless the judge orders me not to."

Lane said he wants the bearing closed for security and policy reasons.

"IT HAS been our policy all along," Lane said. He said he ordered all hearings held on prison grounds be private one year and three months ago when he was named warden at the East Tennessee maximum-security institution.

Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., is scheduled to come before Morgan County General Sessions

Judge John Davis in a preliminary hearing at 10 a.m. on charges connected with his June 10 escape.

Meanwhile, Ray's attorney, Jack Kershaw said he is opposed to a closed hearing, and said he will demand that it be held open to the public.

"COURTROOMS are supposed to be open to the public," Kershaw said. "There are no provisions for closed hearings except in very exceptional and scandalous matters.

"And this is not a scandalous or exceptional matter," Kershaw said.

Lane said the hearing is to be held in a prison conference room under an "agreement" between Judge Davis and himself.

THE AGREEMENT was struck for "security reasons," Lane said. "We're providing the place, and unless the judge orders me not to, this hearing will be closed," he said.

Numerous attempts to reach Davis yesterday were unsuccessful.

Asst. Dist. Atty. Gen. Paul Phillips, of Oneida, Tenn., is expected to call five witnesses to show probable cause for ordering Ray bound over to a Morgan County Grand Jury on charges involving his escape June 10.

THE WITNESSES include Lane and Sammy Joe Chapman, a prison guard who was led by bloodhounds to Ray's hiding place under leaves 55 hours after the escape by Ray and six others, according to Sherman Betterman, an investigator in Phillips' office.

Phillips is also expected to call Clayton Davis, associate warden in charge of security at the prison; Sgt. Luke Fowler, who was in charge of the guard shift at the time the breakout occurred; and John Redick, a record clerk at the prison.

The government must prove that Ray was incarcerated at Brusby Mountain on a valid conviction, and that he was one of seven prisoners who scrambled over the wall using a makeshift ladder.

A MINIMUM of proof is necessary to show probable cause. The six other inmates have already been ordered bound over to the grand jury on escape charges.

A preliminary hearing was not held for all seven prisoners at the same time reportedly because the schedules of all lawyers involved could not be worked out.

Kershaw said yesterday he has not yet decided whether Ray will testify today.

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

PAGE 1

THE TENNESSEAN

NASHVILLE, TENN

Date:

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

44-1987-Sub A-1141

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 3/1/77

GREGORY GRIMSLEY, was contacted at his residence, 614-A Claridge Drive, at which time the identity of the interviewing Agent was made known to him. Mr. GRIMSLEY was informed that the interviewing Agent was there concerning any information that he had located after review of his father's files concerning the JAMES EARL RAY and MARTIN LUTHER KING incidents.

Mr. GRIMSLEY stated, as far as he is concerned, that he had gone through all of his father's pertinent papers. He had found one folder concerning JAMES EARL RAY. This folder had some newspaper articles concerning the RAY-KING incidents by BERNARD GAUTIER, an Associated Press (A.P.) news writer. In addition, the folder contained a photograph, of which there were two copies. The persons identified in this photograph were WELDON GRIMSLEY, newspaper man for the Nashville Banner, JAMES EARL RAY, Captain RICHARD DAWSON, Tennessee Department of Safety, and GREG O'NEAR, Safety Commissioner for the State of Tennessee, and an unidentified white male with a microphone in his hand. The folder further contained an undated rough draft story that Mr. GRIMSLEY believed prepared by his father. A review of this story concerns interview with RAY, but nothing therein referred to RAUL. Also in WELDON GRIMSLEY's file on JAMES EARL RAY was an envelope addressed to WELDON GRIMSLEY, care of the Nashville Banner, Nashville, Tennessee. The postmark on this letter was dated May 2, 1975, at Lake Zurich, Illinois. The return address on the envelope was JERRY RAY, P.O. Box 145, Lake Zurich, Illinois 60047. Examination of this envelope revealed that it was empty.

Mr. GRIMSLEY advised that his father, WELDON, died on June 12, 1977, at which time he was stationed in Manchester, Tennessee, as publisher of the local newspaper in that city. Prior to this time, he worked as a newspaper man for a newspaper in the Fort Walton Beach, Florida area. Furthermore, prior to going to Florida in about 1975, WELDON GRIMSLEY was State editor for the Nashville Banner in Nashville, Tennessee.

Investigation on 7/27/77 at Donelson, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987-Sub M
SA TOY J. FUSON, JR. :sle 3/1/77
 by _____ Date dictated _____

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

ME 44-1987-Sub M

Mr. GRIMSLEY stated that he resided with his father in the Fort Walton Beach, Florida, area after his parents were separated, and at no time did he ever hear his father speak of having any photographs of SAUL. Furthermore, his father never did discuss JAMES EARL RAY or MARTIN LUTHER KING incidents very much with him.

Memphis, Tennessee

44-1987-Sub M

August 1, 1977

RE: MURKIN

On June 17, 1977, MARGARET PARR, 162 North Liberty, New Braunfels, Texas, advised that she had been a close friend of WELDON GRIMSLEY, editor of the Manchester Times, a weekly newspaper in Manchester, Tennessee.

During a visit in May of 1977, with Mr. GRIMSLEY, he informed her that he had covered in detail for a newspaper the trial of JAMES EARL RAY and had interviewed Mr. RAY on numerous occasions. In addition, RAY allegedly made available to GRIMSLEY numerous photographs including photographs of "RAUL", who allegedly resided in Houston and continues to reside in Houston. GRIMSLEY allegedly copied these photographs prior to returning the originals to RAY and PARR feels that these photographs may be located in GRIMSLEY's apartment in Manchester, Tennessee. (P)

Investigation at Manchester, Tennessee, reveals that WELDON GRIMSLEY died on June 12, 1977, and his personal possessions had been retrieved by his son, GREGORY, who was apparently being designated as his administrator. His address was listed as 614-A Claridge Drive, Nashville, Tennessee.

SEARCHED _____
SERIALIZED aw/jr
INDEXED _____
FILED jr

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44-1987-Sub ~~11~~ m-1143

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date of transcription 6/30/77

THELMA L. (LOU) GRIMSLEY, who resides at 3104 Laurel Forest Drive, Donelson, Tennessee, telephone number 883-0011, was contacted at which time the identity of the interviewing Agent was made known to her along with the purpose of the interview.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY advised that she is employed by South Central Bell Telephone Company, 179 8th Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee. She was divorced from her former husband, WELDON GRIMSLEY, on February 4, 1976. Her husband, prior to his death in June of 1977, was a newspaper writer.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY advised as follows:

Her former husband, WELDON GRIMSLEY, went to Memphis to cover the JAMES EARL RAY trial, however, he was there only a short time due to RAY's plea. After RAY had been sentenced and was being admitted to the Tennessee State Prison in Nashville, Mr. GRIMSLEY walked with RAY into the prison and he was interviewed by her former husband while he was walking to the prison. Photographs were made by the news media as her former husband and RAY and law enforcement officials walked into the prison. She has photographs of this event and newspaper clippings from the local paper.

The photographs, to her knowledge, were the only ones in her former husband's file concerning the instant matter. Mrs. GRIMSLEY pointed out that her son GREGORY had been to her home on the previous evening and they had searched through Mr. GRIMSLEY's papers concerning the RAY and KING matter.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY stated that they did locate a story concerning RAY prepared by her former husband, however, the story was never published and her son GREGORY has all the papers and photographs in his possession and will make them available after he finishes reviewing his father's belongings in an effort to locate any other pertinent photographs or writings.

Interviewed on 6/28/77 at Nashville, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987-Sub
M

by SA TOY J. FUSON, JR.:sle Date dictated 6/30/77

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY further related that she recalled that RAY sent her former husband a letter. The letter was addressed to their home in Donelson. The only thing that she recalls about the letter is that RAY appeared to be an uneducated man, due to the bad spelling and sentence structure. The contents of the letter contain no pertinent data as she recalled.

Mr. GRIMSLEY further related that she recalled that JERRY RAY, purported brother of JAMES EARL RAY, who resided in St. Louis, Missouri, had called Mr. GRIMSLEY on Sunday, exact date not recalled. Mr. GRIMSLEY and JERRY RAY went to Tennessee State Prison, Nashville, to visit RAY. This visit occurred several years ago, however, she would estimate the time as five or six years and she recalled no pertinent details coming out of this interview with RAY.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY stated that she had heard the name RAUL, but did not recall any specific comments that Mr. GRIMSLEY may have made regarding RAUL, and she may recall the name by reading it in the newspaper.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY stated that her former husband, like all other newspaper people, would like to brag, and he may have been making up a story concerning any photographs that he had related to individuals that RAY had given him a photograph of RAUL in the past. Therefore, to her knowledge, Mr. GRIMSLEY never had any photographs that JAMES EARL RAY furnished to him, and her husband had never mentioned to her about possessing a photograph of RAUL.

ME 44-1987-Sub M

TJF:sle

1.

The following investigation was conducted by SA TOY J. FUSON, JR., at Nashville, Tennessee, on June 24, June 25, and June 26, 1977:

Efforts were made to contact GREGORY GRIMSLEY at 614-1 Claridge Drive, telephone number 889-0266, in Donelson, Tennessee, on the above mentioned dates.

During the evening of June 26, 1977, GRIMSLEY was contacted at which time the identity of the interviewing Agent was made known to him, along with the purpose of the interview.

Mr. GRIMSLEY advised that his father, WESLEY GRIMSLEY, had recently died and he had been to Manchester, Tennessee, where he was employed, to retrieve his personal belongings. He stated that his father's personal belongings were in the home of his mother, Mrs. LOU GRIMSLEY, at 3104 Laurel Forest Drive, in Nashville. Furthermore, he would review the personal belongings of his father and especially any information concerning JAMES EARL RAY or MARTIN LUTHER KING, to see if he could locate any pertinent writings, newspaper clippings, or photographs.

Mr. GRIMSLEY stated that he works at two jobs and as soon as this information requested could be located or appropriate records checked, he would get back in touch with the interviewing Agent.

ME 44-1987-Sub M

TJF:sle

1

The following investigation was conducted by
SA TOY J. FUSON, JR., on July 7, 1977, at Nashville,
Tennessee:

GREGORY GRIMSLEY, who resides at 614-A Claridge Drive, Nashville, Tennessee, was recontacted concerning the progress that he had made of going through his father's estate records. Mr. GRIMSLEY advised that he continues to work at two jobs and during the past few days, had been ill and was expected to enter the hospital on the following day for a gall bladder operation.

On July 25, 1977, Mr. GRIMSLEY was recontacted concerning the progress that he was making in reviewing his father's estate records. He stated that he had completed the file review and would be available for an interview on July 27, 1977.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date of transcription 8/1/77

JOHN GRIMSLEY, was contacted at his residence, 2101 Clark Drive, at which time the identity of the interviewing Agent was made known to him. Mr. GRIMSLEY was informed that the interviewing Agent was there concerning any information that he had located after review of his father's files concerning the JAMES EARL RAY and MARTIN LUTHER KING incidents.

Mr. GRIMSLEY stated, as far as he is concerned, that he had seen through all of his father's pertinent papers. He located one folder concerning JAMES EARL RAY. This folder had some newspaper articles concerning the RAY-KING incidents by HERMAN GAUBER, an Associated Press (AP) news writer. In addition, the folder contained a photograph of which there were two copies. The persons identified in this photograph were WELDON GRIMSLEY, newspaper man for the Nashville Banner, JAMES EARL RAY, Captain HOWARD DANFORD, Tennessee Department of Safety, and CENG O'NEAL, Safety Commissioner for the State of Tennessee, and an unidentified white male with a microphone in his hand. The folder further contained an undated rough draft story that Mr. GRIMSLEY believed prepared by his father. A review of this story concerns interview with RAY, but nothing therein referred to RAUL. Also in WELDON GRIMSLEY's file on JAMES EARL RAY was an envelope addressed to WELDON GRIMSLEY, care of the Nashville Banner, Nashville, Tennessee. The postmark on this letter was dated May 2, 1975, at Lake Zurich, Illinois. The return address on the envelope was JERRY RAY, P.O. Box 145, Lake Zurich, Illinois 60047. Examination of this envelope revealed that it was empty.

Mr. GRIMSLEY advised that his father, WELDON, died on June 12, 1977, at which time he was stationed in Manchester, Tennessee, as publisher of the local newspaper in that city. Prior to this time, he worked as a newspaper man for a newspaper in the Fort Walton Beach, Florida area. Furthermore, prior to going to Florida in about 1975, WELDON GRIMSLEY was State editor for the Nashville Banner in Nashville, Tennessee.

Investigation on 7/27/77 at Donelson, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987-Sub C
 by SA TOY J. NELSON, JR.:ble Date dictated 8/1/77

ME 44-1987-Sub W

E

Mr. GRIMSLEY stated that he resided with his father in the Fort Walton Beach, Florida, area after his parents were separated, and at no time did he ever hear his father speak of having any photographs of RAUL. Furthermore, his father never did discuss JAMES EARL RAY or MARTIN LUTHER KING incidents very much with him.

8/1/77

AIRTEL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987-Sub M) (C)
SUBJECT: MURKIN

Re San Antonio teletype to the Bureau dated 6/17/77, and Knoxville teletype to the Bureau dated 6/19/77, captioned as above.

Enclosed for the Bureau are four copies of an LIM concerning investigation conducted at Nashville, Tennessee, in an effort to determine if the late WELDON GRIMSLEY possessed a photograph of RAUL. (V)

2 - Bureau (Enc. 4)
1 - Memphis
TJF:sle
(3)
see

Assign to Johnson
SA B. Johnson
Placed in Rotor
CCM

44-1987-Sub M-
1143
1144
SEARCHED
SERIALIZED
INDEXED
FILED

SAC, NEWARK (88-12106)

8/10/77

SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987-Sub M)

MURKIN

Re Newark letter to Memphis dated 8/1/77.

Enclosed herewith is referenced communication which contained a 4 page letter dated 4/13/77 written by GENE R. BARNES, FBI #366609B.

It is suggested this information be forwarded via LHM to the Bureau under Bureau file #44-38861. After perusing this information it is felt it pertains to the MURKIN case as opposed to the most recent 88 case involving JAMES EARL RAY. Newark be advised all Memphis files re MURKIN have been forwarded to the Bureau. Memphis indices check reveals information concerning GENE R. BARNES is contained in the following volumes:

44-1987-Sub K, serial 41, page 2

44-1987-Sub G, serial 769, page 11

2 - Newark (Encs. 3)
① - Memphis
CCM:mrp
(3)
mrp

CCM

44-1987-Sub M-1145
ew
ew

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, MEMPHIS

FROM : *G. J. W.* SAC, NEWARK (88-12100)

SUBJECT: JAMES EARL RAY;
INFORMATION CONCERNING

DATE: 8/1/77

Enclosed herewith for the information of the Memphis Division is a four-page letter dated 4/13/77 written by GENE R. BARNES, FBI #366609B, that pertains to captioned subject.

The letter was furnished to the FBI, Trenton, NJ, by Investigator DONALD V. POWELL, Burlington County Prosecutor's Office, Mt. Holly, NJ.

The letter was obtained by POWELL during interview at Stafford County, Va., with BARNES and according to BARNES he has presented similar letters to the FBI in the past.

Newark contemplates no further action in this matter and this letter is being submitted for information and any action deemed warranted.

True
② - Memphis (Encl. 1)
1 - Newark
LFH:ckf
(3)

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 8 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	



5010-110

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

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 6/30/77

THELMA L. (LOU) GRIMSLEY, who resides at 3104 Laurel Forest Drive, Donelson, Tennessee, telephone number 383-0011, was contacted at which time the identity of the interviewing Agent was made known to her along with the purpose of the interview.

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Mrs. GRIMSLEY advised as follows:

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The photographs, to her knowledge, were the only ones in her former husband's file concerning the instant matter. Mrs. GRIMSLEY pointed out that her son GREGORY had been to her home on the previous evening and they had searched through Mr. GRIMSLEY's papers concerning the RAY and KING matter.

Mrs. GRIMSLEY stated that they did locate a story concerning RAY prepared by her former husband, however, the story was never published and her son GREGORY has all the papers and photographs in his possession and will make them available after he finishes reviewing his father's belongings in an effort to locate any other pertinent photographs or writings.

Interviewed on 6/23/77 at Nashville, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1937-Sub M
by SA TOY J. FUSON, JAF:sle Date dictated 6/30/77 1146

Mrs. GRIMSLEY further related that she recalled that RAY sent her former husband a letter. The letter was addressed to their home in Donelson. The only thing that she recalls about the letter is that RAY appeared to be an uneducated man, due to the bad spelling and sentence structure. The contents of the letter contain no pertinent data as she recalled.

Mr. GRIMSLEY further related that she recalled that JERRY RAY, purported brother of JAMES EARL RAY, who resided in St. Louis, Missouri, had called Mr. GRIMSLEY on Sunday, exact date not recalled. Mr. GRIMSLEY and JERRY RAY went to Tennessee State Prison, Nashville, to visit RAY. This visit occurred several years ago, however, she would estimate the time as five or six years and she recalled no pertinent details coming out of this interview with RAY.

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SAC, KANSAS CITY

8-29-77

SAC, ST. LOUIS (44-775) (RUC)

JAMES EARL RAY; *44-1982-Sub H-1147*
"MURKIN"
CIVIL RIGHTS

Re Newark letter to Bureau, 8-25-77.

Enclosed for Kansas City Division is one copy of above referenced communication, including enclosure.

Copy being furnished to Kansas City inasmuch as BRADLEY referred to in BARNES' letter claimed he spent time in Missouri State Prison.

2 - Kansas City (Encl. 2)
1 - Bureau (INFO)
1 - Alexandria (INFO)
1 - Memphis (INFO)
1 - Knoxville (INFO)
3 --Newark (1 - 44-2104) (INFO)
 (1 - 87-29367)
 (1 - 88-12106)
1 - St. Louis
LFC:klb
10

B. Johnson

44-1982-Sub H-1147

SEARCHED <i>7</i>	INDEXED <i>7</i>
SERIALIZED <i>7</i>	FILED <i>7</i>
AUG 30 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

ME 44-1987 Sub M

L. B. JAMES
4637 APPELATE
MEMPHIS, TN 38109
901 769-1632

44-1987-Sub-M-1148

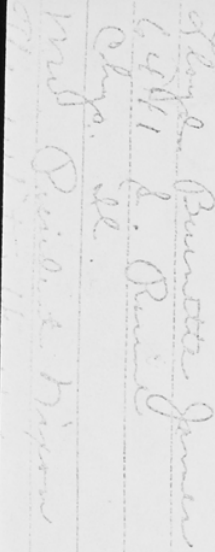
2

11/11/78

B. Johnson - J

ME 44-1987 Sub M

POSTMARK OF
CHICAGO, ILL.
AUG 11 1942
MAILING OFFICE
EAGLEWOOD
950-408-950



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC (44-1987 Sub M)

FROM : SC LOUISE R. NELSON

SUBJECT: MURKIN

DATE: 8/31/77

On 8/30/77, an individual appeared at the Memphis FBI Office identifying himself as L. B. JAMES, 4637 Applegate, Memphis, Tenn. 38109, phone 789-1832. Mr. JAMES requested to speak to an Agent about the Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING murder, advising that he had solved the murder after 10 years, with the help of RUFUS THOMAS, a personal friend of Dr. KING.

Mr. JAMES was advised that he would be contacted by an Agent who is familiar with the MURKIN case.

Mr. JAMES left the attached business card, as well as the following xeroxed items:

1. Newspaper clipping dated Nairobi, Kenya (AP), entitled "Deaths, 'Hospitality' Have Their Price";
2. What appears to be a drawing of the Bible;
3. A card which bears the caption, "The U. S. STANDARD MEASURES AND METRIC CONVERTER";
4. Copy of a Post Office registered mail receipt which indicates LLOYD B. JAMES, Chicago, Ill. sent registered mail to Mr. President Nixon on Aug. 9, 1972.
5. Copy of identification which JAMES exhibited bearing his photograph and having the words ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, showing grade as A1C; expiration date as Indefinite; SSAN [REDACTED] signed "Lloyd B. James".

JAMES has also written on this xerox copy, "Every since 1968 I have spend my own money, to find out who killed Dr. King, Martin Luther in 1977, I have the information, THE MAN is BENRY LOEB (He must be brought to court) My proof - we will need Jessie Jackson & Act. #1, #2, #3". *44-1987 Sub M-1149*



LDN
(2)

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

B. Johnson
attached item

How Ray escaped prison & how he got out of there.

To whom it may concern,

I am making this statement on my own free will, to try to clear up a matter that the public has been kept secret of for nearly 10 years.

That is whether or not, James Earl Ray, who was convicted of killing Dr. Martin Luther King, had any help in escaping from Missouri State Prison or not. And also if rewards were offered inside the prison for Kings killing.

I was sent to Mo. State Prison in 1957 for 12 yrs. during which time I became known as a tough guy, because of my own escape with James Bradley, in which we attacked three prison guards, overpowered a guard tower, & took the guard in the tower as hostage, and were later captured in the Missouri River. We were given 3 additional years to serve for this.

Also because of several knife fights & running the prison with dope smuggled in we both had bad reputations.

Because of our reputations many men knew us & we them.

Later James Earl Ray came to the prison. He was a quiet guy & didn't speak much to any one, but it was proved he could be trusted. He was not a snitch.

At various times Bradley & I would pay Ray to watch for guards while we were in a card or dice game in an infirmary.

One we would use Ray to pass out dope & collect money from it for us.

He was released to public if possible
L.R. Baines

Ch. Simpson

100

44-1987 SUB-M-1150

(2)
All the prison knew Bradley & I escaped over the wall, so it was no surprise when Ray asked us the best ways to get out of the prison. We told him of several ways it could be done, by going over the wall or thru it, including the bread truck way.

Ray was a walk man at that time (working in the cell block). To escape by the bread truck, he ask for & got a job transfer to the bakery. Later he made good his escape.

There was no outside help in the escape. The only help he got was from Bradley & myself in telling him how to escape & thru by the master in the loading dock not saying he was in the bread box.

Also the papers keep claiming that Ray told his cellmate he would still bring for \$100,000, this is a lie. as is of any word going around for things killing and a reward for it.

His cell mate told those lies to the F.B.I. because they thought by doing so their own sentence would be cut or they would get a parole. His cell mate did not even know he was going to escape because Ray did not trust him nor did they know they were killed & requested for it, till it came out in the news. That story got out only because that is what the F.B.I. wanted to publicize to him.

While Ray was still out on escape

(3)

after King was killed, the F.B.I. came
to the prison to talk to me & to
Bradley.

I was in solitary at this time for
breaking into the prison canteen factory & stealing
a bunch of cloths.

The F.B.I. ask me if I knew where
Ray was hiding hiding out at, if I
knew how he escaped, if I could
tell them anything.

At this time I was under a 25 yr. sentence,
& I told them I didn't know nothing about nothing,
cause I could have been there for aiding in the
escape.

Bradley, who was under sentence of 4 life terms,
& 2 yr. sentences and a 4 yr. term, also told
them no.

I did lie under the other question tell them
that I did not believe Ray killed King.

I said he was set up to look like it
cause he was in escape & no one would believe
his story.

I know Ray well & he could not
kill a stray cat or dog must have take a
human life.

I told the F.B.I. 10 yrs. ago
that I also did not believe Ray did not
his room, & did not put the gun in it, his
fingers were on the gun, but he couldn't
pull the trigger, some one else had to
cause shooting Ray, Ray wouldn't have the
power or heart to do so. He just did
what he was paid for & that was the

(11) and the room + I was the year in it.

The F.B.I. did not release any of the facts they found out at the prison, just what would make Ray look bad.

Before I could not say anything because I was in the doing time, & could be prevented for aiding. The same for Bradley. But now, Bradley is dead, he was killed by St. Louis, Police after he made a parole a few years ago. so he is the only one left that knows besides Ray that he did have help to get out of prison but it was from the prison its self, he got the help, not outside.

What happened outside after the escape I do not know.

Chas R. Bowers
April 13th 1977

My Mr. Bowers # number was #22271
Bradley was # 71844 A below.

AFTER 5 DAYS RETURN TO
PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
BURLINGTON COUNTY
MOUNT HOLLY, N.J. 08060

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Post Office Box # 332
Trenton, New Jersey 08603

Attn: Agt. Buffalo

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM : SAC, NEWARK (44-2104) (RUC)

SUBJECT: JAMES EARL RAY;
"MURKIN"
CIVIL RIGHTS

DATE: 8/25/77

Enclosed for the information of the Bureau, are two Xerox copies of a letter written by GENE R. BARNES which is self-explanatory. One Xerox copy of this letter is being furnished Alexandria, Knoxville, Memphis and St. Louis Offices for their information.

This letter was furnished to the FBI in Trenton, N.J., by Investigator DONALD V. POWELL, Burlington County Prosecutor's Office, Mt. Holly, N.J., who obtained the letter during an interview with BARNES at Stafford County, Virginia.

Copies of BARNES' letter are being furnished to Memphis and Knoxville who were office of origin in the MURKIN and JAMES EARL RAY case, respectively. Information copy also being furnished St. Louis, Missouri, inasmuch as BRADLEY referred to in BARNES' letter claimed he spent time in Missouri State Prison.

Newark files disclose that BARNES was subject of a Newark ITSP investigation in February, 1977, and subsequently arrested by Virginia State Police during a high-speed chase on 2/8/77, and incarcerated in the Stafford County Jail in Stafford, Virginia.

Alexandria see your file 87-3041.

Newark indices failed to contain any identifiable information concerning JAMES BRADLEY mentioned in BARNES' letter.

44-1987 SUB-M-1151

- 2 - Bureau (Enc. 2)
 - (1 - "MURKIN")
- 1 - Alexandria (Enc. 1)
- 1 - Memphis (Enc. 1) *True*
- 1 - Knoxville (Enc. 1)
- 1 - St. Louis (Enc. 1)
- 3 - Newark

- (1 - 44-2104)
- (1 - 87-29367)
- (1 - 88-12100)

CS/lmw
5010-110(9)

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

Bohannon

NK 44-2104

Newark file regarding "MURKIN" has been destroyed.

Any further investigation in this matter is being left to the discretion of the office of origin in the respective cases.

Newark conducting no further investigation in this matter.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray's Brother Jerry Filing Suit; Claims He Was Libeled

Jerry Ray, brother of James Earl Ray, the man serving a 99-year-prison sentence for the slaying of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said today he is filing a federal court suit in Memphis charging he was libeled.

Jerry Ray told *The Press-Scimitar* he mailed a copy of a civil suit naming as defendants writer George McMillan of Frogmore, S.C., the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Little Brown Publishing Co., Alabama writer William Bradford Huie, and former Asst. State Atty. Gen. Henry Haile, now in private practice in Nashville, yesterday.

He said "All of these people, I believe, have been writing and saying lately that I knew my brother James killed Dr. King, that I was told by him he was going to do it, and all sorts of other lies. That's why I'm suing."

Jerry Ray, who had worked for a coun-

try club in a Chicago suburb for the past four years, said he was now on a month's leave of absence. "Because of all the publicity I think I'm probably going to lose my job," he said.

He said he was staying in a little town in Georgia "which is about an hour's drive from Brushy Mountain" (the state prison where his brother James is incarcerated). He said, "I can get over to see James frequently."

Jerry Ray said he visited his brother over the weekend and that James Earl Ray is getting ready to take a lie-detector test for the House Assassination Committee, which is probing the death of King.

James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to the Memphis slaying but later recanted, saying that he was pressured by his lawyer, Percy Foreman of Houston, into doing so. He has since made unsuccessful court attempts to get a new trial.

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

PAGE 12

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN

Date: AUGUST 30, 1977

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS 44-1987-SUB-M-152

☐ Being Investigated

JP *me*
B. Johnson *J*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Atlanta, Georgia

October 14, 1977

MURKIN

On October 7, 1977, Mason Evans, 2574 River Glen Circle, Atlanta, Georgia, telephone number 458-3621, telephonically contacted the Atlanta Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), on October 7, 1977, and advised that on the day that Martin Luther King was killed in Memphis, Tennessee, he was at the Coach and Six Restaurant located next door to the 1776 Peachtree Street Building Atlanta, Georgia. He was having lunch with Henry Hay and Bill Gordan of the Cadillac Division of General Motors. Evans was sitting at the bar when he overheard the bartender described as a white male, approximately 38 to 40 years old, 6'2", 200 pounds, blond hair, who stated that if Martin Luther King goes to Memphis he will be killed. Evans stated that he did not think too much of this remark and did not pay much attention until later that day he heard that Martin Luther King had been killed in Memphis.

Evans stated that he still did not place too much emphasis on this matter until he read in the newspaper several weeks ago that a Jack Peetee was arrested by the United States Secret Service and charged with threatening the President of the United States. Evans understood that a number of weapons were recovered from Peetee's residence by the United States Secret Service. Evans stated that he believed a Jack Peetee was the building manager of the 1776 Peachtree Street Building and possibly could be acquainted with the bartender at the Coach and Six Restaurant which is next door. Evans was unable to substantiate why he felt that the manager Peetee of the 1776 Peachtree Building might be associated with the bartender from the Coach and Six Restaurant.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

44-1987-Subm-1153

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 21 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Inf. only [Signature]



MURKIN

Evans advised that he thought about this matter for quite some time and decided to notify the FBI of Peetee and this bartender.

On October 11, 1977, Special Agent George Walldrop, United States Secret Service, 100 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia, advised that his office has a file regarding a John Crain Peteet, who was arrested by the United States Treasury Department for illegal possession of firearms.

Walldrop advised that Peetee was not the building manager of the 1776 Peachtree Street building and he was not arrested by the United States Secret Service for threats against the President. Walldrop stated that his office has no record of a Jack Peetee.

A review of the files of the Atlanta Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation have no record identifiable with a Mason Evans or a Jack Peetee, nor a John Crain Peteet.

F B I

Date: 10/14/77

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via AIRTEL _____
(Precedence)

To: Director, FBI (44-38861)

ATTENTION:
☒ GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION
☒ CIVIL RIGHTS SECTION
☐ CRIMINAL SECTION
☐ INTELLIGENCE DIVISIONFrom: SAC, ATLANTA (44-2386) *p*

Subject: MURKIN

☒ CR(A) ☐ EL ☐ DIH ☐ CRA-64
☐ PA ☐ PE ☐ PF ☐ E
☐ DAMV ☐ DAMV-FR ☐ CAA
☐ AP ☐ IWFC ☐ CWAA ☐ FI
☐ EID ☐ Bomb Threats ☐ Extremist Matters
☐ White Hate ☐ Black

Summary of Complaint:

On 10/7/77, MASON EVANS telephonically contacted the Atlanta Office and advised that he had overheard a bartender, name unknown, who worked at the Coach and Six Restaurant located next to the 1776 Peachtree Street Building, say that if MARTIN LUTHER KING went to Memphis he would be killed. EVANS stated that he did not think much of this bartender's comment until later that day when he heard that MARTIN LUTHER KING had been killed in Memphis. EVANS about three weeks ago read an article in a newspaper that stated that a JACK PEETEE was arrested by the United States Secret Service for threatening the President of the

INDICES: ☐ Negative ☐ See Summary

ACTION: UACB:

☒ No further action being taken and
 2 - Bureau (Enc. 4) ☒ LHM enclosed
 2 - Memphis (Enc. 2) ☐ FD-376 (Enc. to LHM)
 2 - Atlanta ☐ LHM being submitted
 JJH:psm ☐ Report being submitted
 (5) ☐ Preliminary investigation instituted
☐ Limited investigation instituted
☐ Investigation continuing

44-1987-Sub M-1154
☐ Copy to: ☐ USA
☐ Secret Service
☐ ATF

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 21 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	
<i>[Signature]</i> <i>Wfe</i>	

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M
 Special Agent in Charge

AT 44-2386

United States. EVANS stated that he understands a number of weapons were recovered from PEETEE's residence by the Secret Service. EVANS stated that he believes PEETEE was the manager of the 1776 Peachtree Street Building and might have been acquainted with the bartender at the Coach and Six Restaurant located next door. EVANS was unable to substantiate why he thought that PEETEE and the bartender at the Coach and Six Restaurant would have been acquainted. Contact with United States Secret Service Atlanta, Georgia, indicates that they did not arrest a JACK PEETEE and that in fact, a JOHN CRAIN PETEET had been arrested by the Treasury Department for illegal possession of firearms. The Secret Service advised that JOHN CRAIN PETEET was not the manager of the 1776 Peachtree Street Building.

The Bureau is requested to contact the Department of Justice in order to determine if additional investigation is desired.

2*

King Prober Predicts 'Blockbusters'

Congressman Claims 'Startling' New Data

By TIM WYNGAARD
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Chairman Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, of the House Assassinations Committee has informed panel members to expect "blockbuster" developments in the investigation of the killing of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Committee members said Stokes told them the committee's investigating staff has developed "startling" information about the slaying of the civil rights leader in 1968. They said Stokes promised them a full briefing by the middle of next month.

The committee's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy has been scaled down and the panel's professional staff apparently has been spending virtually all its time exploring new leads in the King case.

Sources said Stokes has moved the headquarters for that investigation to St. Louis from Washington to lessen national media attention and to allow the staff to spend all the time it needs in Memphis.

In addition, the sources said, Stokes has told them the King investigators turned up "more than 100" witnesses who never have been interviewed by police officials. The probe has taken congressional investigators to Canada to pursue possible leads there as well, the sources said.

Word that new information is forthcoming, based on partial briefings of committee members by Stokes in recent days, is the first indication of any progress in the investigations.

Last August, after the committee was wracked by feuds between members and staff aides, Stokes slammed a tight secrecy seal on its work and hired Cornell University Law School Prof. G. Robert Blakey as new staff director.

To prevent leaks, only Stokes is being fully briefed by Blakey's staff on progress of the investigation, and Stokes is passing along part of the information to committee members. But Stokes promised the committee a full staff report by mid-November.

Some work is continuing in the Kennedy case, primarily on possible links between Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby and right-wing Cubans, according to the sources.

But primary attention is being devoted to the King matter "because the trail is a lot fresher there" and because early investigative work apparently has been more productive, according to the committee members.

Of the new witnesses in the King probe, about 60 are considered to be of little use, the sources quote Stokes as reporting. But the remaining 40 or more have turned over some "significant" information, according to those reports.

The Canadian end of the investigation centers on convicted King assassin James Earl Ray's claim that he was recruited there by a mysterious man whom he knew only as "Raoul" to take part in a gun and drug-smuggling plan. Instead, he was framed for the King killing, Ray claims.

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

PAGE 1

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN

Date: 10/28/77

Edition: Final

Author:

Editor:

Title:

MURKIN

Character: ME 44-1987

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS 1155

☐ News Investigated 10/28/77 Bub M

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 31 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Only filed to
Bureau 10/31/77 son

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Co-Author of King Book Is New Lawyer for James Earl Ray

WARTBURG, Tenn. (AP) — A lawyer who co-authored a book on the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. will defend King's convicted killer, James Earl Ray, at his trial for a June 10 escape from a rural Tennessee prison.

Shortly after being given court permission yesterday to represent Ray, Mark Lane said he would defend his client on grounds of wrongful imprisonment in the King assassination.

The contention is that Ray did not receive a fair murder trial and should never have gone to jail. Lane hopes that a victory on that basis could lead to a new trial in the King murder.

"The heart of our approach is to win a new trial on the murder charge for Ray," Lane said. "The American people are entitled to a trial in which all of the evidence on the King assassination is presented in open court."

He said he hopes to show when the trial starts tomorrow that Ray "was both tortured and coerced by Memphis authorities and threatened and coerced by the FBI into pleading guilty."

Ray, 49, is serving a 99-year term in the central Tennessee's Brushy Mountain Penitentiary near Wartburg on his 1969 guilty plea to killing the civil rights leader in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

He unsuccessfully attempted to withdraw his plea in the King murder within a week after entering it and has been trying to win a new trial ever since.

Ray could be sentenced to an additional five years if convicted on the escape charge. He is eligible for parole on the murder charge in 2001.

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

PAGE 22

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN

Date: 10/26/77

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title: MURKIN

Character: ME 44-1987
or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub M-1156

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 31 1977	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Morgan County Criminal Court Judge Lee Asbury approved Ray's motion to hire Lane and dismiss Jack Kershaw of Nashville, who had represented Ray the past 10 months.

Lane, 50, says Ray believes the dismissed attorney made as much as \$20,000 from a September interview of Ray that was published in Playboy magazine.

Ray contends that some of the quotes attributed to him were not his. In the interview, Ray is quoted as saying that he alone planned the June 10 breakout in which six other prisoners scaled a wall. All seven men were back in custody within days. The other six have pleaded guilty.

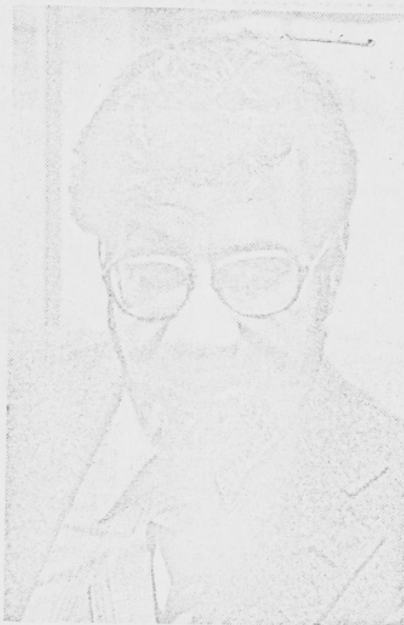
Kershaw was not in court yesterday, but he said on Monday that any funds he received from Playboy went toward Ray's case.

Ray, wearing a green fatigue jacket and blue jeans stained with white paint, answered, "Yes, sir," when Asbury asked if he no longer wanted Kershaw to be his attorney. Ray gave the same answer when Asbury asked if he wanted to employ Lane and two Wartburg lawyers as his new counsel.

Lane and comedian Dick Gregory wrote a book on the King murder titled "Code Name 'Zorro,'" which was published last May.



JAMES EARL RAY
On way to court



MARK LANE
Ray's new attorney



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Memphis, Tennessee
December 5, 1977

JAMES EARL RAY;
Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM;
CIVIL RIGHTS - CONSPIRACY

On November 21, 1977, retired Special Agent Joe C. Hester appeared at Washington, D. C., at the request of the House Committee on Assassinations.

Mr. Hester met with the Committee staff in their offices at Washington, D. C., and was interviewed for a total of four hours by two different groups of five persons each. Both groups were affable and were not in any way critical of the investigation conducted in this case.

The first group of five interviewers asked a variety of questions but seemed to be particularly preoccupied with the investigation conducted by Legats in Mexico. Mr. Hester was able to answer many of the general questions regarding the activities of Legats but referred them to Assistant Director Richard Long when they began to ask more specific questions regarding the investigations by Legats and the manner of transmittal of this information to FBI Headquarters.

The second group of five interviewers asked more general questions regarding the Bureau's investigation of the King murder. They seemed to be greatly concerned with the allegation of conspiracy. Mr. Hester advised them that he believed the conspiracy theory was an invention by the Department of Justice to be used to justify the FBI's investigation of Dr. King's murder. Mr. Hester advised them that he had never personally believed there was a conspiracy and he did not believe that any of his FBI superiors had ever believed in the conspiracy theory. Mr. Hester further advised that it was his personal opinion that James Earl Ray, acting alone, had murdered Dr. King and that his subsequent travels were probably financed by armed robbery.

44-1987-Sub M-1157
This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

4 - Bureau (44-38861)
(1) - Memphis (44-1987)
JRW:jap (5)

SEARCHED ☒
SERIALIZED ☒
INDEXED ☒
FILED ☒

RE: JAMES EARL RAY;
Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

This group was concerned with how the subject Ray had known how to obtain false documents following his arrival in Canada. Mr. Hester pointed out that a "Top Ten" criminal had been arrested in Canada and had been returned to the Missouri State Penitentiary and had served time there with James Earl Ray prior to Ray's escape. Mr. Hester indicated it was his belief that this "Top Ten" fugitive had been responsible for instructing Ray on how to proceed in obtaining false documents in Canada.

This group touched on such diverse elements as the information furnished by John McFerren regarding Frank Liberto, and one of the interviewers agreed that they had not believed McFerren to be a very reliable witness. They also discussed Ray's purchase of the rifle in Birmingham; the fact that Officer Redditt was moved from the firehouse near the Lorraine Motel just prior to the murder; what motive did Ray have for killing Dr. King; whether or not there was any evidence to indicate a conspiracy; whether or not there were any wiretaps and whether or not there had been any surreptitious entries made against King and his followers at Memphis prior to the assassination; and when, following his escape, did Ray appear to have made up his mind to assassinate Dr. King.

In addition, they asked numerous questions about the political climate in Memphis just prior to the assassination and inquired as to what investigation was being conducted by the FBI in regard to the Sanitation Workers Strike and the first march conducted by Dr. King. Mr. Hester was forced to admit that he had had nothing to do with the investigation of Dr. King prior to the murder and he suggested that they talk to current Special Agent Howell S. Lowe who would be in a position to furnish information in this regard.

They inquired about the interview of James Earl Ray conducted by former Special Agent in Charge Robert G. Jensen, former Special Agent Robert F. Boyle, and Mr. Hester at the state prison in Nashville, Tennessee, following Ray's plea of guilty. Mr. Hester recounted as best he could recall the events that transpired in connection with this attempted interview and advised the interviewers that former Special Agent Robert F. Boyle has suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and possibly might not be competent to furnish information regarding this investigation.

RE: JAMES EARL RAY;
Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

The Committee indicated that they might desire to interview Mr. Hester again, either personally or telephonically, and they were assured that he would be available and agreeable to assisting them in any way possible.

x

12/5/77

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) (P*)
SUBJECT: MURKIN

Enclosed for the Bureau are 4 copies of an LHM dated 12/5/77, captioned "JAMES EARL RAY; Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM; CIVIL RIGHTS - CONSPIRACY.

2 - Bureau (Encs. 4)
1 - Memphis

JRW:jap
(3)
jap

JRW

44-1987-sub M-1158

SEARCHED *SL*
SERIALIZED *SL*
INDEXED *SL*
FILED *SL*

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI Files on King Slaying Tell of 'Jealous Husband'

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The FBI investigation into the murder of Martin Luther King included the possibility the motive was "cuckoldry" — that James Earl Ray was hired by a husband jealous of the civil rights leader, documents showed today.

The documents, obtained under a Freedom of Information suit and made available to UPI, suggested the FBI initially suspected the murderer was hired by the husband of a woman known to be a close friend of King.

The files released do not touch on the FBI's surveillance of King prior to the assassination, but it long has been known J. Edgar Hoover kept watch on the personal life of the civil rights leader.

An FBI memo dated Dec. 18, 1975, cited a column by Jack Anderson, who claimed he was told by Hoover in 1968 that "the motive behind the murder of King was cuckoldry and that the assassin apparently had been hired by a jealous husband."

Anderson identified the man only as the husband of a Los Angeles woman friendly with King.

An FBI internal investigation of Anderson's story indicated the bureau immedi-

ately after the assassination in 1968 had "interviewed a number of people close to King, including the Los Angeles woman with whom King had had a close relationship."

But the memo insisted this interview was intended only to determine "if King had confided in them information relating to threats on King's life which information could be used for leads in determining the identity of the assassin."

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

PAGE 1

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN

Date: 1-25-78

Edition:

Title:

MURKIN

Character: 44-1987
or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

44-1987 sub m-1159

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

FBI - MEMPHIS

FBI/DOJ

The memo, written more than three years after Hoover's death, also denied that the former FBI director had supplied this information to Anderson.

King's friends believed there must have been a conspiracy to kill him — and even Ray said he had an accomplice — but the FBI privately decided Ray killed King with help from no one.

In the largest manhunt in history, the bureau decided Ray had both the racial hatred to provide a motive and the means to finance an escape that carried him to Canada four days after the slaying and to Lisbon and to London within five weeks.

The FBI, trying to question everyone in contact with Ray in the year between his escape from prison and the April 4, 1968, slaying, could find no one who plotted murder with him.

The internal files on the King case portray a small-time robber who charged fellow prisoners 50 percent interest on loans to finance their poker games. And he "mainlined" amphetamines and barbiturates, and after he escaped from a Missouri

Turn to Page 12 — FBI

FBI Checked 'Cuckoldry' as Ray's Possible Motive

From Page 1

ri prison moved to Los Angeles, visited a hypnotist, paid a plastic surgeon to reconstruct his nose, and pulled bills from a fat wad in his pocket to pay for dancing lessons. He signed up for lessons wherever he moved — but never became much of a dancer.

His racism came through in a remark he made to a friend, Charles Stein, who drove with him from Los Angeles to New Orleans and back.

"If Negroes want to be free, they should go north or west," Stein quoted Ray. "If they stay in the South, they should be willing to be slaves."

The FBI acknowledged in a memo that it failed to establish how Ray raised the money for the \$1,995 white Mustang in which he escaped or the \$134.95 for the .30-06 caliber Remington pump rifle with \$74.60 telescopic sight used to kill King, or the money to go first to Mexico, then to Canada, where he bought a roundtrip ticket to London.

But the special agent-in-charge of the Memphis bureau told headquarters on June 27, 1974, that agents found "nothing to indicate that Ray ever received any large sum of money from anyone, and what we know of his living habits both before and after the murder would indicate that he lived on a very limited amount of money.

"We do not know the source of even the smallest amount of money possessed by Ray, but since we know him to have robbed a bank in England after fleeing to that country, it is a reasonable presumption that Ray committed robberies during the time he was a fugitive," the agent said.

As for Ray's claim in a magazine interview that a shadowy "Raoul" offered him \$12,000 to kill King, the bureau, after an exhaustive effort, rejected that possibility Dec. 2, 1968, saying:

"Investigation by us, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Mexican authorities has failed thus far to identify Raoul or to verify his existence. We have no information to date to indicate that Ray was involved in a conspiracy."

Ray also encouraged conspiracy plots

when he stood in court on March 10, 1969, and changed his plea from innocent to guilty but said he could "not accept" the assertion of his own lawyers and the prosecution that no conspiracy existed.

Ray, 50, was sentenced to 99 years and has made numerous attempts for a new trial.

He escaped for a few days from Brushy Mountain State Prison in Tennessee last June. A special House committee is secretly re-investigating both the King killing and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Many still believe that King was silenced by those who hated him for his victories in

the struggle to bring true equality to blacks.

Ray deftly eluded a nationwide FBI dragnet in the weeks following the April 4, 1968, assassination by assuming aliases and hopscotching the continent and Western Europe on a series of plane flights under bogus passports, the files show.

Before he was arrested by London's New Scotland Yard on June 8, 1968, FBI agents concluded Ray seriously considered trying to become a mercenary soldier in Africa.

TP0005 2080315

RR HQ AT ME

DE TP

R 262047Z JUL 78

FM TAMPA (157-3231) (RUC)

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861) ROUTINE

ATLANTA (44-2386) ROUTINE

MEMPHIS (44-1937) ROUTINE

BT

UNCLAS

MURKIN

RE TAMPA AIRTELS JULY 2, 1974 AND DECEMBER 19, 1975,
WITH ENCLOSED LHMS CAPTIONED, "JAMES EARL RAY: DR. MARTIN
LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM."

ON JULY 26, 1978, SGT. ROBERT THOMAS WEHUNT, JR.,
HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON, MAC DILL AFB (MAFB), TAMPA, FLA.,
HOME ADDRESS, 3109 HARTNETT AVE., TAMPA, FLA., CAME TO THE
TAMPA OFFICE (IPO) OF THE FBI AND ADVISED THAT HE HAD READ AN
ARTICLE IN "THE TAMPA TRIBUNE" OF JULY 26, 1978, TO THE EFFECT
THAT A RUSSELL G. BYERS HAD TOLD THE HOUSE ASSASSINATION
COMMITTEE THAT HE HAD BEEN OFFERED MONEY ON BEHALF OF A GROUP OF

44-1987-sub M-1160

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>msc</i>	FILED <i>msc</i>
JUL 26 1978	
<i>B. Johnson</i>	

PAGE TWO TP 157-3231 UNCLAS

BUSINESSMEN TO KILL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. IN 1966 OR
EARLY 1967. SGT. WEHUNT ADVISED THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY
FURNISHED INFORMATION TO THE TPO OF THE FBI IN 1974, TO THE
EFFECT THAT HIS FATHER, WHO WAS FORMERLY A GUARD AT THE FULTON
COUNTY JAIL, ATLANTA, GEORGIA, HAD STATEMENTS FROM CONVICTS
IN THE FULTON COUNTY JAIL THAT THESE CONVICTS HAD BEEN
APPROACHED BY VERY INFLUENTIAL BUSINESSMEN TO KILL DR. KING
FOR ONE-HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS. SGT. WEHUNT ADVISED THAT HE
DID NOT FEEL THAT APPROPRIATE ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN CONCERNING
THE INFORMATION THAT HE HAD FURNISHED AS HIS MOTHER AND SISTER
HAD NEVER BEEN INTERVIEWED. SGT. WEHUNT STATED THAT HE HAD
TALKED WITH THE LEGAL ADVISOR AT MAFB CONCERNING THIS MATTER
AND WAS ADVISED TO RECONTACT THE TPO OF THE FBI. SGT. WEHUNT
MADE AVAILABLE A THREE PAGE STATEMENT THAT HE HAD WRITTEN OUT
AND WHICH HE HAD SIGNED. THIS STATEMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

"IN 1966-67 MY FATHER HAD STATEMENTS THAT I SAW THAT WAS
MADE BY APP-3 PRISONERS AT THE FULTON COUNTY JAIL THAT STATED
THEY WERE OFFERED LARGE SUMS OF MONEY TO KILL MARTIN LUTHER

PAGE THREE TP 157-3231 UNCLAS

KING, JR. MY FATHER WAS A DEPUTY SHERIFF OF FULTON COUNTY AND WAS WORKING AT THE FULTON COUNTY JAIL AT THE TIME. (COVER 9 YEARS). I SAW THE STATEMENTS. I DO NOT REMEMBER THE NAMES, HOWEVER, I DO REMEMBER THAT THERE WERE THREE PEOPLE MY FATHER DESCRIBED AS INFLUENTIAL BUSINESS MEN WHO OFFERED THE MONEY. LATER MY FATHER TOLD ME HE HAD TRIED TO TURN THE STATEMENTS OVER TO THE GBI AND WAS TOLD HE HAD BETTER NOT IF HE WANTED TO LIVE. LATER HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD IF HE TOLD ANY ONE THEY WOULD KILL MY FATHER AND HIS ENTIRE FAMILY. MY FATHER ALSO TOLD ME THAT HE KEPT THE STATEMENTS AND A LARGE SUM OF MONEY THAT HE HINTED TO BEING AROUND \$3 MILLION TO 3! MILLION DOLLARS. LATER MY MOTHER TOLD ME SHE THOUGH MY FATHER TOLD HER HE TURNED THE STATEMENTS OVER TO A MAN WHO WAS GOING TO WRITE A BOOK. THE MAN'S NAME IS BOB SOMETHING - MY MOTHER KNOWS HIS NAME. MY FATHER DIED IN 1973 AND I TOLD ALL THIS TO THE FBI IN 1974.

I DO NOT KNOW THE NAME OF THE BANK WHERE MY FATHER

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KEPT THE STATEMENTS BUT IT WAS LOCATED IN LITTLE FIVE POINTS IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA. MY SISTER, NOW MRS. WAYNE UPSHAW OF STONE MT. GEORGIA, SAID SHE TYPED THE STATEMENTS FOR MY FATHER. MY MOTHER, ALMA L. WEHUNT OF 3015 ALBATROSS LANE, DECATUR, GEORGIA, KNOWS, PROBABLY, MORE THAN I, HOWEVER, I KNOW SHE IS SCARED ABOUT TALKING ABOUT IT.

MY NAME IS ROBERT THOMAS WEHUNT, JR. OF 3129 HARTNETT AVE., TAMPA, FLA. 33611 - TEL. 839-7281. I WORK AT A 56 HEADQUARTERS SQ. MACDILL AFB, TEL 336-3942-2724.

MY FATHER HAD A NICK NAME OF TWILIKER. (SPELLING UNKNOWN). I TALKED TO CPT. WHITE, LEGAL OFFICE AT MAC DILL WHO DIRECTED ME HERE AFTER TALKING TO HIS FRIEND, A FBI AGENT IN CALIFORNIA. SIGNED: ROBERT T. WEHUNT, JR."

SGT. WEHUNT WAS ADVISED THAT THE INFORMATION THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY FURNISHED TO THE TPO OF THE FBI HAD BEEN FURNISHED TO FBIHQ AND IN TURN WAS FORWARDED TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS DIV. OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

BT