

U. S. Department of Justice

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FEDERAL BUREAU

DO NOT DESTROY; HISTORICAL VALUE,
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

of

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FOR HISTORICAL

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DO NOT DESTROY - PENDING LITIGATION

INVESTIGATION

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Volume Number

4396

DO NOT DESTROY - PRESERVE FOR
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

DO NOT DESTROY - PENDING LITIGATION

See also Nos.

Per Page 1487 of 1971

DO NOT DESTROY - PENDING LITIGATION

From Subject of 1971

per Page 1487 of 1971

CHAW-WALKER

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Irrked Chief Quits Assassination Panel

Washington, D.C. — AP — Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez submitted his resignation as chairman of the House assassinations committee on Wednesday following a long battle with Chief Counsel Richard A. Sprague.

The Texas Democrat, who referred to Sprague as an "unconscionable scoundrel," submitted his resignation in a letter to Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill. The speaker said the resignation would have to be considered by the full House, raising the prospect of a divisive floor fight.

O'Neill said he would not submit the resignation for a House verdict until he talked to Gonzalez.

Sprague made no early comment.

Republican Conference Chairman John B. Anderson of Illinois said, "the life of the committee still hangs by a slim thread."

In his resignation letter, Gonzalez said "it seems clear now that the House leadership is unwilling to offer me support."

"Yet I cannot bring myself to sign pay vouchers for an unscrupulous individual, an unconscionable scoundrel, and no power on Earth can compel me to do so," Gonzalez wrote.



REP. HENRY GONZALEZ
Resigns in Protest

The committee investigation of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King has been embroiled in controversy since the day Congress convened in January.

The probe came to a virtual standstill Feb. 10 when Gonzalez fired Sprague for refusing to say which staff people could be fired to cut costs. All other members told Sprague to stay put on the ground that any firing has to be done by the committee, not the chairman alone.

The House has given the committee only temporary life through the end of this month and must decide either

to disband or continue it for the two year life of the Congress.

Gonzalez said in his letter to the speaker that Sprague "refused to produce any kind of information on which the committee could make rational budget decisions."

Further, Gonzalez said, "since he pursued a deliberate course of action to undermine me with members of the committee and staff alike, I had no recourse but to dismiss him, which I did."

"I found in the committee an administrative nightmare," Gonzalez wrote. "I found a chief counsel who assumed full powers of the committee itself, (and by implication usurped the powers of the House itself); a chief counsel who was insubordinate and insulting not to mention disloyal."

"I found unjustifiable salaries, unjustified employees and reckless, inexplicable financial obligations," Gonzalez said. "I had a responsibility to act and no one has yet demonstrated that I acted wrongly or without full cause."

The situation appeared similar to the fight in the last Congress between then Chairman Lucien N. Nedzi (D-Mich.) and fellow Democrats on a Select House Intelligence Committee.

Nedzi resigned and former Speaker Carl Albert put his resignation before the full House, which voted to refuse to accept it.

But that committee remained deadlocked by the dispute and the House finally replaced it with a new committee with Rep. Otis G. Pike (D-N.Y.) as its chairman.

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

A-2

Milwaukee Sentinel
Milwaukee, Wisc.

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MAR 4 1977	
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MI-44-388

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

House Makes Bid to Keep— Assassination Panel Chief

Washington, D.C. —UPI— House Democratic leaders sought Thursday to rally members of the assassinations committee in an effort to talk its chairman, Rep. Henry Gonzalez, out of resigning.

The Texas Democrat sent a letter of resignation to Speaker Thomas O'Neill (D-

Mass.), but he has refused to talk with House leaders from his San Antonio home.

O'Neill summoned the seven other Democrats on the panel to a closed door meeting Thursday to seek a solution to the controversy created by Gonzalez's attempted dismissal last month of the panel's chief counsel, Richard Sprague.

The committee was created last year to investigate the assassinations of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. It was given temporary life in the new Congress until March 31 amid controversy over Sprague's proposed budget of \$13 million for two years and his wish to buy sophisticated eavesdropping devices.

The committee overrode Gonzalez's firing of Sprague, but a scheduled meeting to resolve the controversy last week was canceled when Gonzalez came down with the flu.

Gonzalez charged in his letter to O'Neill that "notwithstanding my illness and absence, several of my col-

leagues on the committee appear to be interested in usurping even my ministerial powers."

Accusing Sprague once again of mismanagement, insubordination and disloyalty, Gonzalez denounced him as "an unscrupulous individual, an unconscionable scoundrel." Sprague had no comment Wednesday.

Democratic leader Jim Wright, who has been seeking a compromise on the Sprague issue, said he doubt-

ed that the House would accept Gonzalez' resignation if it continued the committee.

"It (the House) might vote to do one or the other, but not both," said Wright.

One source said Wright had worked out an agreement with eight members of the panel, including at least one of the five Republicans, to keep Sprague on the job but collar his powers and make him chief investigator with a chief of staff appointed over him.



Henry Gonzalez

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

A-10

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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MAR 4 1977	
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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Considers Testifying

Nashville, Tenn. —AP— Atty. Jack Kershaw, representing James Earl Ray, said Friday that his client would agree to testify before the House Assassination Committee depending on the committee's willingness to investigate a conspiracy theory in the death of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Kershaw confirmed Friday that a letter received by the committee in Washington was written by Ray. In the letter, Ray said he was willing to discuss testifying and directed inquiries to Kershaw, his new attorney.

Another condition, Kershaw said, would be a limitation on the committee's power to control questioning of Ray, who pleaded guilty to shooting King in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968, but who has since said his plea was coerced.

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

A-3

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wisc.

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MAR 6 1977	
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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Halt of Slayings Probe Blamed on Crime

San Antonio, Tex. — AP — Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez said the assassination of John F. Kennedy will never be investigated in a meaningful way "because vast and powerful forces, including the country's most sophisticated crime element, won't stand for it."

"This criminal element is all-pervasive, loaded with nothing but money and in many ways more potent than the government itself," said Gonzalez, a Texas Democrat who submitted his resignation last week as chairman of the House assassination committee.

In an interview published Sunday in the San Antonio Express-News, Gonzalez said other forces against the investigation include "the Kennedy family and heavy business interests in the Dallas-Fort Worth area who don't want all the old JFK muck raked up."

The congressman called the assassination probe committee "a put-on job and a hideous farce that was never intended to work."

He criticized the committee's chief counsel, Richard Sprague, as an "unconscionable scoundrel" and added:

"Sprague tried to spend committee money on long distance phone calls to his Philadelphia law firm and to the home of his girl friend there. And get this. He actually took a little Acapulco vacation for himself while on the committee payroll."

Sprague was not immediately available for comment.

Gonzalez predicted the committee will forget about the Kennedy assassination now and go into "a weak, half-legged investigation of the

Martin Luther King assassination as a sop to blacks."

Gonzalez resigned as committee chairman following a showdown with Sprague during which Gonzalez tried to fire Sprague but fellow committee members supported the former Pennsylvania prosecutor.

His resignation has not yet been formally accepted.

Gonzalez also said in the interview with the Express-News that Sprague "has on the committee payroll at \$30,000 a year someone by the name of Gaeton Fonzi, who's never so much as been in Washington. He's supposed to have underworld connections, and he's in Miami. What he does down there nobody knows and Sprague won't tell."

Fonzi, former part owner of Miami magazine, was contacted Sunday in Miami. He said he joined Sprague's staff Jan. 1 at \$30,000 a year. He was working for Sen. (Richard) Schweiker for a year on the assassination. I compiled a book-length stack of material on the report. Sprague got hold of that information and went over it, and on the basis of what I'd done on it, hired me January 1.

"I was not on the (Schweiker) committee staff; I was on his personal staff. I did a lot of traveling." Fonzi said he took a pay cut to join Sprague.

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

A-3

Milwaukee Sentinel
Milwaukee, Wisc.

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MAR 1977	
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1-MI-62-1178

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Gonzalez Terms Panel a Farce

AP and UPI

San Antonio, Tex. — The House Assassination Committee is a put-on job and a hideous farce that was never intended to work, says Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.), who resigned last week as chairman of the panel.

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy will never be reinvestigated in a meaningful way "because vast and powerful forces, including the country's most sophisticated crime element, won't stand for it," he said.

"This criminal element is all-pervasive, loaded with nothing but money and in



Rep. Henry Gonzalez

many ways more potent than the government itself," Gonzalez said. His resignation has not been formally accepted.

Other forces against the investigation include "the Kennedy family and heavy business interests in the Dallas-Fort Worth area who don't want all the old JFK muck raked up," he said in an interview published Sunday in the San Antonio Express-News.

Criticizes Sprague

He was not immediately available for additional comment.

He criticized the committee chief counsel, Richard Sprague, as an "unconscionable scoundrel," adding:

"Sprague tried to spend committee money on long distance phone calls to his Philadelphia law firm and to the home of his girl friend there. And get this. He actually took a little Acapulco vacation for himself while on the committee payroll."

Sprague, contacted at his home in Philadelphia Sunday, refused to comment on Gonzalez's statements.

Gonzalez predicted that the committee would forget about the Kennedy assassination and go into "a weak, one-legged investigation of the Martin Luther King assassination as a sop to blacks."

Gonzalez's resignation followed a showdown with Sprague during which Gonzalez tried to fire him. His fellow committee members supported the former assistant Philadelphia prosecutor.

Gonzalez said he tried to get support from House Speaker Thomas O'Neill (D-Mass.) and Majority Leader Jim Wright (D-Tex.).

"It was an exercise in futility," he said. "The fix was in."

He said he then realized "at last that the House leadership never had intended for the JFK investigation to fly, and indeed had prefabricated the whole thing for the skids."

Without being specific, Gonzalez said "powerful forces, including criminal elements," had deliberately put Sprague and himself into the committee on an automatic collision course.

"They never did want the Kennedy assassination conspiracy unmasked," said Gonzalez. "They knew I was an honest, direct man who wouldn't hold still for a transparent phony like Sprague. They were so right. The JFK investigation is over."

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

A-11

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wisc.

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MAR 10 1977	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

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Probe Chief Holds Little Hard Data

Washington, D.C. —UPI— The House Assassinations Committee, its life ticking away toward a March 31 deadline, has yet to produce "smoking gun" evidence in its five month investigation into the murders of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the chief counsel acknowledged Monday.

Richard Sprague, the controversial investigator for the leaderless panel, said he could not come up with a thorough, believable report by the end of the month when the committee's temporary mandate expires.

"The chance of coming up with a smoking gun, if that's the only way, then in my opinion, the job cannot be done," Sprague said.

But he said a good report could be made if the committee received a new mandate, an investigative staff and sufficient budget for the remainder of this two year session of Congress.

Rep. Bruce Catuto (R-N.Y.) called Tuesday for dissolution of the committee and appointment of a new panel and new chairman with a specific timetable and dates for periodic reports to the House.

Catuto said that "whatever good new ethics rules might have done to restore public faith in Congress, the Assassinations Committee has ~~more than undone with its~~ sorry, petty ineptitude."

~~Rep. Richardson Preyer~~ (D-N.C.), who presided at Monday's two sessions as ranking member of the committee, told reporters that the odds now were minimal that the panel could survive another House vote to extend its life.

Preyer presided in the absence of Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.), who resigned as chairman last week in a dispute over his attempt to fire Sprague. Other committee members voted to keep Sprague.

Preyer rebutted charges made by Gonzalez in a San Antonio newspaper interview Sunday that criminal forces, powerful business interests, the Kennedy family and the House leadership were trying to abort the Kennedy investigation.

"No sinister forces are at work," Preyer said. "The committee has enough problems of its own."

Because of the shrinking time frame, the panel Monday whizzed through all but two of some dozen agenda items involving frozen staff salaries, unpaid bills and expenses, restoration of access to FBI and Secret Service materials, security and house-keeping measures.

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

A-2

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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MAR 8 1977	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK-King Panel Hears New Evidence Claim

Washington, D.C. —AP— Chief Counsel Richard Sprague told the House Committee on Assassinations Wednesday that he had uncorroborated evidence "indicating that others may have had knowledge of or participated in the assassination" of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Sprague also told the committee in a brief opening statement that his staff had evidence on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy indicating "there was prior knowledge on the part of some individuals of that as-



Richard Sprague

sassination before it occurred."

But in both investigations,

Sprague told the committee, the staff has been unable to thoroughly check witnesses' stories or determine whether they are corroborated.

The chief counsel gave only the hints of what his evidence was.

Sprague's indication of evidence of a conspiracy in the King assassination was in contrast to a Justice Department investigation that concluded that no evidence had been found that King was killed by anyone other than James Earl Ray, acting alone.

The assassination committee, with a new chairman in charge, is moving to provide evidence to Congress that further investigations are warranted into the two assassinations.

Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) was named chairman Tuesday by Speaker Thomas O'Neill (D-Mass.) after the House voted to accept the resignation of Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.).

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

A-1

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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Framed in Slaying, Ray Tells Nation

James Earl Ray contended in an interview broadcast nationally Tuesday night that he had been sent to have a tire fixed when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated and that he was set up to take the blame.

Ray, convicted of killing King, said "investigations by people representing me" were producing evidence that he thought would clear him in a new court proceeding.

Ray made the comments in a TV interview with newsmen Dan Rather on the CBS program "Who's Who." It was Ray's first such interview since the assassination April 4, 1968, in Memphis.

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

A-5

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Tells TV Newsman Associate Set Him Up

Washington, D.C. — AP — James Earl Ray contended in a nationally broadcast TV interview Tuesday night that he had been sent to have a tire fixed when Martin Luther King was assassinated, and that he was set up to take the blame.

Ray, convicted of killing King, said "investigations by people representing me" are producing evidence he thinks will clear him in a new court proceeding.

But Ray shed no new light on who killed King if he did not, or why. He said, as he has before, that his only contact with the murder was through a Latin named Raoul. He said he thought Raoul was conducting a gun running operation.

Ray made the comments on the CBS-TV program "Who's Who," in his first television interview since the assassination April 4, 1968, in Memphis. The interview took place at Brushy Mountain State Prison in Petros, Tenn.

Newsman Dan Rather told him many viewers obviously would think he was just making up a story to get himself out of prison and Ray replied he had always thought people would not believe anything he said in a news interview.

Giving new details in his story about Raoul and a conspiracy, Ray said he delivered a rifle to Raoul shortly before the assassination in what he thought was part of the gun running operation. He said Raoul then sent him to have a tire fixed.

He said the attendants at a service station told him they

were too busy to fix the tire because of the hour. King was assassinated shortly before 6 p.m., the traffic rush hour period.

Ray said in the interview he was certain he was not in the rooming house from which the rifle was fired at King after 5:30 p.m.

Ray said Raoul had been directing him in gun running activities for a year. He said

there was nothing to distinguish Raoul except that his hair was auburn, not black like most Latin people Ray knew.

But he said he and Raoul had never discussed killing King and so he did not know why King was killed. He said he believes the most plausible theory is that King was killed to halt his civil rights activities.

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

A-2

MILWAUKEE SENTINAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK-King Panel to Hold Hearing

Washington Star Service

Washington, D.C. — The House Assassination Committee, in an effort to remain in existence after March 31, will hold a hearing this week with "live witnesses," possibly including James Earl Ray, according to sources.

Sources said they did not know whether Ray would testify because of security problems.

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

A-1
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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MAR 15 1977	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK-Cuba Probe Possible

AP, Washington Post

Washington, D.C. —AP—

A reputed underworld chief's refusal to say whether he knew in advance that President John F. Kennedy would be assassinated may launch a new congressional investigation into the long debated Cuba-Mafia connection with the murder.

But the House Assassinations Committee's questioning of Santo Trafficante Wednesday shed no light on how much evidence the panel has to support that connection.

Trafficante refused to answer any questions, even after he was threatened with being cited for contempt of Congress.

The 62 year old former Cuban gambling czar pleaded his rights under the Fifth and other amendments more than a dozen times.

The two key questions put to Trafficante — whether he knew in advance that Kennedy was to be killed and whether he knew Jack Ruby, the man who killed Lee Harvey Oswald — were raised in a newspaper article last year.

George Crile, a Harper's magazine editor, reported that a Cuban exile named Jose Aleman said Trafficante told him in September, 1962, that Kennedy would be killed.

Trafficante, of Miami, was one of three underworld figures involved with the CIA in an abortive attempt to slay Cuba Premier Fidel Castro in 1960, according to the old Senate Intelligence Committee.

That committee investigated the Cuba-Mafia angle two

years ago as part of its investigation of CIA abuses. The committee concluded that Castro was unlikely to have had a hand in Kennedy's slaying despite Castro's knowledge of underworld plots against him.

In Crile's article, Aleman, an FBI informer at the time, was quoted as saying Trafficante charged that John and Robert Kennedy, the attorney general, took graft and did not keep a bargain.

"Have you seen how his brother is hitting (Teamster President Jimmy) Hoffa, a man who is a worker, who is not a millionaire, a friend of the blue collars?" Aleman quoted Trafficante. "He doesn't know that this kind of encounter is very delicate. Mark my words, this man Kennedy is in trouble and he will get what is coming to him."

Crile reported that when

Aleman argued Kennedy would be re-elected in 1964, Trafficante replied, "No, Jose, he is going to be hit."

Crile quoted Aleman as saying he reported the conversation to the FBI but agents took no notice of it until after Kennedy was assassinated on Nov. 22, 1963. Two FBI agents then questioned Aleman at length.

The assassination committee's chief counsel, Richard Sprague, conducted most of the interrogation of Trafficante, asking him about his participation in CIA-sponsored plots in the early 1960s to assassinate Castro, about reports that Trafficante predicted Kennedy's "hit" more than a year in advance and about rumors that Trafficante might have been acquainted with "an American gangster type named Ruby" years before the president's death.

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

A-1

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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MAR 18 1977	
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FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Assassination Panel to Check Bullets

Washington, D.C. (AP)—

The House assassination committee is hoping that two independent ballistics experts can prove for the first time whether the rifle handled by James Earl Ray killed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

"If the tests prove that rifle is not the one that was fired we've got a whole new ball game," a committee aide said Thursday after plans were announced for tests on the rifle.

The independent tests, set for next week, also will be conducted on the bullet that killed King, said Walter Fauntroy, District of Columbia delegate, adding that the experts who will make the tests have not yet been selected.

It is not possible through the ballistics tests to establish

whether King was assassinated by Ray, who acknowledged handling the rifle. Ray also contends he turned the weapon over to a man named Raoul before the assassination.

Ray confessed guilt in the 1968 killing of the civil rights leader, but has been trying since to win a new trial, claiming he entered the plea on bad legal advice.

Meanwhile, the committee disclosed plans for two of its lawyers to interview Ray, under oath if he agrees, next week in the prison where he is serving a 99 year sentence.

Richard Sprague, the committee's chief counsel, and Robert Lehner, deputy chief counsel of the King assassination investigation, will conduct the interview.

Fauntroy, chairman of a subcommittee conducting the King assassination investigation, also said the full committee is not likely to put Ray on the witness stand this month. But he said, "We expect at some time we will want to take testimony from Ray under oath."

The ballistics evidence in King's death has been the subject of dispute since Ray's guilty plea.

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

A-16

Milwaukee Journal
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MAR 19 1977	
FBI—MILWAUKEE	

FBI/DOJ

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Fatal King Bullet To Be Examined

Washington, D.C. — AP — The House Assassinations Committee announced Thursday that it will conduct independent ballistics tests next week on the bullet that killed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

The committee also confirmed that its investigators will interview James Earl

Ray in prison where he is serving a 99 year sentence on conviction of killing King.

An FBI expert testified in proceedings following King's assassination in 1968 that the bullet was too badly damaged to determine if it came from the rifle that Memphis police say bore Ray's fingerprints.

Walter Fauntroy, Wash-

ington (D.C.) delegate, chairman of the subcommittee conducting the King assassination investigation, said two ballistics tests will be made by separate professionals and not the FBI.

Ray's new lawyer, Jack Kershaw of Nashville, Tenn., said Ray's story is that he had turned the rifle over to a man he knew only as Raoul and was sent off on an errand before King was shot.

Fauntroy also said that it is not likely Ray will testify before the committee before the end of this month.

He said the interview with Ray next week may be only the first of a series. He said the investigators will be authorized to interview Ray under oath next week if Ray agrees.

Ray said in a television interview this week that he is willing to testify before the committee only if it will listen to his full story. He said he did not want to be presumed guilty by the committee and looked on only as a source for finding who else may be involved.

Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) told reporters after two days of closed hearings that he would not comment on anything that had been discussed except for the two announcements which the committee had voted to authorize Fauntroy to make.

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

A-1

Milwaukee Sentinel
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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MAR 19 1977	
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FBI/DOJ

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Killings Probe Budget Pared

Washington, D.C. — UPI — Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill said Monday the House Assassination Committee has scaled down its budget estimate for the rest of this year from the original \$6.5 million to \$2.5 million.

The panel must get new legislative life before March 31 to continue investigations started last year into the killings of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE SENTINAL
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FBI - MILWAUKEE

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Committee Staff Hears From Ray

Petros, Tenn. — UPI — Staff members of the House Assassinations Committee listened to James Earl Ray tell his story of how he was involved in the slaying of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Ray's attorney said he hoped it would help Ray's bid for a new trial.

Ray, serving a 99 year murder sentence at Brushy Mountain State Prison for the King assassination, freely answered all questions put to him by the investigators in a two hour interview, said his latest attorney, Jack Kershaw of Nashville.

Chief Counsel Richard Sprague and four other committee members who flew to Tennessee from Washington to interview Ray refused to answer reporters' questions on leaving the prison. Sprague is due to report to the committee in Washington Wednesday.

Kershaw said it was possible that Ray would testify later before the full committee.

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE SENTINAL
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MILWAUKEE	

FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Information From Ray No Surprise

UPI, AP, Washington Post

Washington, D. C. — The House Assassinations Committee, investigating alleged conspiracies in the murders of President John Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., apparently got no new sensational information from James Earl Ray.

The committee chairman, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), refused to tell reporters Wednesday what was obtained from Ray, confessed assassin of King, when he was interviewed by staff counsel at his Tennessee prison earlier in the week. Jack Kershaw, Ray's attorney, said Ray did not supply any surprise information.

The report by chief counsel Richard Sprague came after the panel adopted a drastically revised \$2,796,650 budget for its investigations during the rest of this year.

Meanwhile, Mary Baird confirmed Wednesday that her husband told Rep. Gene Snyder (R-Ky.) of a plot to assassinate King. Mrs. Baird said her husband, a retired Louisville (Ky.) policeman, told Snyder of a plot involving police officers and FBI agents.

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

A-2

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Man Indicted In Threat to Kill Mrs. King

Baltimore, Md. — AP — A reputed Ku Klux Klan leader linked to an alleged plot to sabotage military facilities and a civil rights group's office has been indicted on a federal charge of threatening to kill the widow of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

William Marx Aitcheson, of Clarksville, Md., was charged in a one count indictment with mailing a letter containing a threat against the life of Coretta Scott King, the widow of the late civil rights leader.

The letter, mailed about Feb. 20, 1976, and addressed to Mrs. King's Atlanta home, said she would be killed if she did not stay off the University of Maryland's College Park campus, where Aitcheson is a communications major, the indictment said.

No date was set for Aitcheson's arraignment, although an FBI spokesman said Wednesday there were no immediate plans to take him into custody on the federal charge.

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A-2

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MAR 25 1977	
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FBI/DOJ

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Recruitment Effort to Kill King Related

Louisville, Ky. — AP — Mary Baird confirmed Wednesday that her husband told Rep. Gene Snyder (R-Ky.) about an alleged plot to assassinate Martin Luther King Jr.

Mrs. Baird, 44, said her husband, Clifton, 50, a retired Louisville policeman, told Snyder about an alleged plot involving Louisville policemen and FBI agents.

Snyder said last week that a man told him he had been offered \$500,000 on two occasions to kill King. He declined to name the man, however.

Mrs. Baird said her husband retired from the Louisville Police Department several years ago after 27 years on the force. "He told me about this when I first married him, seven years ago," she said in an interview. "I think he thought he wasn't going to be believed."

Mrs. Baird said she believed one reason her husband came forward with the allegation was because "he wants to know why someone asked him" to kill King, who was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968.

"It sure has been on his mind," Mrs. Baird said. "He said it just got to bothering him and that's why he contacted Mr. Snyder."

Her husband, before contacting Snyder, told one of James Earl Ray's attorneys about the alleged plot, she said. Mrs. Baird said her husband was "discouraged" after talking with the attorney. Ray is serving 99 years in prison for slaying King.

The \$500,000 offer allegedly was made two or three years before King was killed, according to an "informed source" quoted by the Kentucky Post, which identified Baird as the man who wrote to Snyder.

Baird told his wife "he was offered \$500,000 to kill King and 'he didn't appreciate it,'" Mrs. Baird said.

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A-2

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Probers Claim Unity, New Assassination Data

Washington, D. C. —UPI— The House Assassination Committee Tuesday prepared its case for survival, proclaiming new found unity among its members and fresh but uncorroborated information on the killings of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

The House Rules Committee approved a resolution 9 to 4 Monday to continue the panel for the rest of this Congress beyond its scheduled March 31 termination date. The House is expected to take it up Wednesday.

Earlier, the committee issued its first report of the year, claiming new leads in the King killing and indications that the Warren Commission was wrong in at least

one aspect of its inquiry into the Kennedy murder.

The committee got in trouble when it asked for \$13 million over two years — since cut to \$5.6 million — and was further jeopardized when Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.) resigned as its chairman after failing to get support in his effort to fire chief counsel Richard Sprague.

Gonzalez renewed his complaints in a speech Monday, charging that he was treated shabbily and repeating his demands that Sprague be fired.

The panel's report noted that the Warren Commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald, Kennedy's killer, and Jack Ruby, who in turn killed Oswald, did not know each other.

But the committee said it had found a witness never before questioned who claimed to have been introduced to Oswald by Ruby before the Kennedy assassination.

The committee also claimed several new leads indicating that Oswald was associated with CIA supported anti-Castro groups as well as having connections with the CIA and FBI.

"The most important development" in the King killing, said the report, is James Earl Ray's willingness to talk to the panel, which he did in interviews in the penitentiary in Tennessee last week and again Monday. Ray is serving a 99 year sentence for the killing.

The report developed to

new unpublished information and rules panel members ignored it while questioning Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), the new chairman, about the Gonzalez-Sprague dispute.

The findings of the committee, in addition to the information about Oswald and Ruby and about Ray being willing to talk, include:

The association of Oswald with the CIA backed group suggests that "his reported pro-Castro activities and possibly his alleged trip to Mexico City may have been designed to mask those associations."

"Documents in the possession of the FBI ... which indicate that the bureau destroyed relevant evidence and proffered misleading statements to the Warren Commission."

The willingness of Ray to talk.

Reports that local and federal officers tried to implicate a Louisville policeman in an assassination plot against King. (Scripps-Howard reporters said that Clifton Baird, 50, told the committee Monday that he had been offered \$500,000 to kill King.)

The panel said it wanted more information on how Ray got \$7,000 for his trips abroad after the King killing.

It will investigate published reports that a member of Ray's family might have information about Ray's claim that he had an associate in Memphis at the time of the King killing.

Extensive ballistic tests will be made of the rifle that Ray is said to have used to kill King.

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A-4

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
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FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Assassination Panel Claims New Evidence

Washington, D.C. — UPI — The House Assassination Committee, seeking to persuade Congress to keep it in business past Thursday, said it has new but "uncorroborated" evidence on the killings of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King.

The panel's first formal report of the year was issued while the Rules Committee considered its bid for continuation, and on the House floor former Chairman Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.) was repeating his bitter criticism of the chief committee counsel, Richard Sprague.

Gonzalez in an hourlong speech repeated allegations Sprague exceeded his authority and the House leadership abandoned him when he sought unsuccessfully to fire Sprague. Gonzalez then resigned as chairman.

The panel had been given only temporary life to March because of opposition to its budget request for \$13 million over two years and House weariness of the Gonzalez-Sprague squabble.

Its report offered no new indications of its discoveries since its inception last September.

It said, "The most important development in the King investigation is the willingness of James Earl Ray ... to talk to the committee."

Sprague and other committee investigators last week interviewed Ray at the Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary in Tennessee, where he is serving 99 years for killing King.

The panel also said it had information of a "conspiracy" to kill King, reportedly from a now deceased informant for what the report described only as "a Southern police department."

The panel noted the Warren Commission, which decided Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy, concluded Oswald never knew his own killer, Jack Ruby.

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

— A-3
MILWAUKEE SENTINAL
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MAR 30 1977	
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FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK-King Prober Resigns

Washington, D.C. —AP— Richard Sprague, embattled chief counsel to the House Assassination Committee, resigned Wednesday after being told the House would kill the investigation if he remained on the job.

The committee accepted the resignation at an emergency meeting Wednesday. Some members insisted, however, that he had not been asked to quit.

The House scheduled a vote for later Wednesday on whether to continue the investigation of the murders of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. If the vote is negative, the committee expires at midnight.

Sprague submitted a two sentence resignation, effective immediately, after a 3½ hour meeting Tuesday night with committee Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) and several other members of the panel, sources said.

"Shown Figures"

"He was convinced by some members that a head count indicated strongly that the resolution to reconstitute the committee would fail on the floor of the House if he remained," a source said. "He was shown figures. He felt there was nothing left for him to do but resign."

The source said Sprague

would not retract his resignation even if asked.

Sprague was reported to be out of town and not available for comment.

His letter said he resigned "with the hope that the Congress can now proceed with the challenge of seeing that these investigations are pursued promptly."

Sprague had become controversial after he requested \$6.5 million a year to conduct the probe for two years. The House balked at that figure, despite Sprague's argument that he needed the money because he could not rely on existing agencies like the FBI or the CIA, since their conduct was a part of his probe.

Witness Dies

This dispute developed into an angry battle between Sprague and the committee's first chairman, Rep. Henry

Gonzalez (D-Tex.), who resigned earlier this month.

In another development, a witness contacted by the Assassination Committee in its investigation was found dead Tuesday in Palm Beach, Fla., of what police said appeared to be a self-inflicted shotgun wound.

The victim, George de Mohrenschildt, 65, of Dallas, Tex., a geologist who taught French at Bishop College, reportedly had been an acquaintance of Lee Harvey Oswald and his wife Marina.

Palm Beach County Sheriff's Lt. Richard Sheets said there was "no reason to suspect anything other than suicide but the investigation is continuing." He said no suicide note was found. But he said no formal ruling will be made until after an autopsy is conducted.

An assassination committee source said investigators



Richard Sprague

for the panel had been trying to find de Mohrenschildt interview him and only recently had located him.

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A-1

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JFK Witness

Apparent Suicide

From Sentinel Wire Services.

A former friend of Lee Harvey Oswald apparently killed himself within hours after an investigator for the House Assassinations Committee attempted to interview him, authorities ruled Wednesday in Palm Beach, Fla.

The Palm Beach County medical examiner said an autopsy of George de Mohrenschildt showed the fatal wound was "conducive to that of a self-inflicted gunshot," according to sheriff's Lt. Richard Sheets.

Committee investigators had been trying to contact de Mohrenschildt even though the Warren Commission concluded there was no evidence linking him to the slaying of President John F. Kennedy.

The House later Wednesday voted to extend its investigation of the assassinations of Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Sheets said his office would consider the autopsy results before deciding next week whether to close the case. But he said "something big would have to jump

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A-1

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out of the woodwork" to change the theory that the death on Tuesday was a suicide.

He also said a tape recorder being used to record a television program in an adjacent room picked up the sounds of de Mohrenschildt firing the gun.

"We have the gunshot on tape," Sheets said, adding that there were no sounds of anyone else in the background. He said that by comparing the tape with television station logs, investigators determined that de Mohrenschildt shot himself at 15 seconds past 2:21 p.m. Tuesday.

De Mohrenschildt, a geologist who taught French at Bishop College in Dallas, had known both Oswald and his wife Marina.

Assassinations committee investigators had been trying to find de Mohrenschildt, 65, and only recently had learned he was in Florida.

Sheets said that at noon Tuesday, committee investigator Gaeton Fonzi went to the palatial three story mansion of Mrs. Charles Tilton III, where de Mohrenschildt was visiting a relative. He said that when Fonzi asked to see de Mohrenschildt, he was told by de Mohrenschildt's daughter that he was not at home and left saying he would return that evening.

Body Found by Daughter

The man's body was found by his daughter, Alexandra, 33, several hours later. He had been shot in the head and a 20 gauge shotgun lay nearby, Sheets said. He said there was no suicide note.

"At the time of the shooting, he was alone in the house except for two maids who said they did not hear the shot," Sheets said.

The House Assassinations Committee was eager to question de Mohrenschildt about a report that he knew in advance what Oswald planned to do.

But de Mohrenschildt's extensive testimony gave no hint of what Dutch journalist William Oltmans recently called a "shocking confession" that he knew of Oswald's plans and felt "responsible for Oswald's behavior."

The commission concluded de Mohrenschildt did not know Oswald had told his wife Marina that he was "going to get some money," and had only by accident learned that Oswald had tried to assassinate Gen. Edwin Walker.

Knew Oswald Well

However, de Mohrenschildt's testimony indicated that he knew Oswald's character well and might have guessed other plans.

While de Mohrenschildt and his wife Jeanne were visiting the Oswalds, Mrs. de Mohrenschildt opened a closet door and exclaimed, "Look, George, they have a gun here. What is that? That looks like a telescopic sight."

Marina Oswald said, "That crazy idiot is target practicing all the time."

De Mohrenschildt, talking in the apartment doorway with Oswald said in a joking tone, "Are you then the guy who took a potshot at Gen. Walker?"

De Mohrenschildt testified Oswald's reaction was a giveaway.

"He sort of shriveled, you see, when I asked this question," de Mohrenschildt testified. "He made a peculiar face."

The Warren Commission concluded that Oswald was the man who shot at Walker, narrowly missing his head.

Oswald Confided Little

These and many other references indicated de Mohrenschildt, a close observer of human nature, was able to guess much about Oswald although Oswald confided very little.

De Mohrenschildt expressed remorse for having innocently helped Oswald with financial and other problems. His testimony indicated he might also have felt guilt if he had guessed the plan to kill Kennedy and did nothing to stop it.

"It was just a misfortune that we helped them," de Mohrenschildt testified. "We shouldn't have done it. We should have known better."

Albert Jenner Jr., assistant commission counsel, sought through hours of questioning to find a motive beyond charity in de Mohrenschildt's friendship with Oswald in Fort Worth, Tex., and later in Dallas. He found none.

In reference to Oswald's attractive wife, Jenner asked de Mohrenschildt if he ever courted pretty women.

"I still do. I hope I do until the day I die," he said. But in his description of the Oswalds' poverty, "horrible surroundings and dull life," he made it clear he and his wife were acting out of kindness.

Panel's Life Extended

The final vote on continuing the existence of the committee for two more years, which has been in hot water since the first day of the current legislative session, was 230 to 181. Without the approval, the committee would have died at midnight Thursday.

Committee Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) said after the vote he believed the approval came only because the committee's controversial chief counsel, Richard A. Sprague, resigned earlier in the day in an effort to save the investigation.

Stokes said an informal survey Tuesday indicated the committee would lose its battle to stay alive by 20 votes if Sprague had remained.

The final vote came after opponents of the committee tried to get the House to hold a rare secret session to hear evidence the committee has uncovered.

The maneuver failed, 226 to 185, after Stokes said the committee feared information such as the names of witnesses the committee had talked to or wants to talk to would leak out and put their lives in danger.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Suicide Victim an Oswald Friend

AP and UPI

Washington, D.C. — A Russian born professor who apparently killed himself in Florida Tuesday had said he "was responsible for" the activities of Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas, according to previously secret minutes of the House Assassination Committee.

The minutes of a closed session March 17 also included testimony that the professor, George de Mohrenschildt, had indicated that "there were others involved in the actual shooting" of John F. Kennedy.

The transcript was released Wednesday night after the panel won House approval to continue for two more years its investigation of Kennedy's murder in Dallas in 1963 and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s death in Memphis in 1968. The 230 to 181 vote occurred only hours after the controversial chief counsel, Richard Sprague, resigned.

[Among Wisconsin congressmen, Democrat Robert Cornell and Republican William Steiger voted against the two year extension. Democrat Clement Zablocki did not vote. All others voted to extend the panel.]

Pledge Made

The committee's new chairman, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), pledged that it would "lay to rest all the rumors and rumors of rumors" about the Kennedy and King assassinations.

Stokes said he expected to obtain a \$2.7 million budget this year. At one point, the panel had asked for \$6.5 million.

Stokes had told the House the committee was pursuing new leads and talking to new witnesses. But critics demanding proof tried to force the first secret House session since the 1880s to make the

panel spell out its evidence.

That effort was defeated 226 to 185 on Stokes' argument that leaks of the witnesses' names and could put some of their lives in danger.

Friend of Oswald

The body of de Mohrenschildt, a 65-year-old language professor, was found Tuesday in the Palm Beach (Fla.) home of his sister-in-law in what police said was suicide.

According to the transcript, staff member Robert Tannenbaum said Willem Oltmans, a Dutch journalist who had covered the Kennedy assassination, approached

the committee to say "he befriended a fellow who looms in the shadows of this whole investigation. His name is George de Mohrenschildt."

Oltmans, according to the transcript, said de Mohrenschildt had been in contact with him for 11 years and had visited him in Holland several weeks ago.

"The purpose of his trip was to divulge for the first time his knowledge of the assassination of the president, and he indicated that he was responsible for Oswald's activity, and that there were others involved in the actual shooting of the president," Tannenbaum reported.

"What is significant, of course," Tannenbaum told the committee, "is that George de Mohrenschildt is one person — I really have to underscore this — who is involved with Lee Harvey Oswald as a part of history; that is, he befriended Oswald and had his daughter care for Oswald's wife and child while Oswald was living at a YMCA in Texas; so he is a person that is not a John Doe, who is coming forward, giving a confession to someone in the media."

Tannenbaum said he had lost contact with de Mohrenschildt, who has been described by Florida sources as a former CIA agent who had been operating in Haiti at the time of Kennedy's assassination.

The committee recently traced de Mohrenschildt to Palm Beach and sent an investigator to talk to him. The investigator missed him Tuesday morning and said he would return that night.

Palm Beach police and a medical examiner said de Mohrenschildt committed suicide at the home of socialite Charles Tilton III about 2:30 p.m. that day by putting the barrel of a shotgun in his mouth and pulling the trigger.

Authorities said a tape recorder being used to transcribe a television program recorded the gunshot and that there were no sounds of anyone in the background as de Mohrenschildt died.

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A-19

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Marchers Recall King

Memphis, Tenn. —UPI— The march and the songs were the same, but the spirit that marked the civil rights movement of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. appeared to be missing.

Only 800 of a hoped for 5,000 marchers braved a drizzling rain Monday to walk the downtown streets in a milelong memorial service marking the ninth anniversary of King's assassination April 4, 1968.

Later at the City Auditorium, there were speeches by labor and civil rights leaders, including Jerry Wurf, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and Ben Hooks, incoming director of the NAACP.

"You might have killed a dreamer, but you can't kill the dream," Hooks said. "Tell it to the children that Martin Luther King died so we would have a right to live."

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

A-3
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FBI - MILWAUKEE	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Marchers Mark King Slaying

Memphis, Tenn. — UPI — Crowds marched beneath the motel balcony where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated nine years ago Monday in a demonstration aimed at keeping alive the dream of the slain civil rights leader.

But a march leader said the movement King led during the 1960s appears to have waned. March officials had hoped as many as 5,000 marchers would take part, but rainy weather apparently kept many away. When the crowd was asked to sing "We Shall Overcome," many did not know the words and had to hum along.

An estimated 800 persons, most of them black, took part in the march to the Lorraine Motel to eulogize the Nobel Peace Prize winner.

King was killed on April 4, 1968, as he stood on the balcony of the Lorraine. He was the victim of a bullet police said was fired from a high powered rifle from a flophouse across the street.

King's convicted killer, James Earl Ray, is serving a 99 year prison sentence for the assassination but has been talking with investigators of the House Assassinations Committee in hopes of winning a new trial.

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— A-3
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Stirring Dust, Spreading Distrust

The House has voted to continue the Select Committee on Assassinations largely because, as Rep. Richard Bolling (D-Mo.) said, the committee has stirred up so much dust over the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King that to discontinue it would be seen as a coverup.

Yet, The Washington Post suggests that the committee's 14 page report on its activities to date should be called "Twice Told Tales." That's about right. Nothing new in the report has been corroborated. And much that is in it has been disclosed before and discarded.

The committee has had a hectic life. Its first chairman, Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.), quit in a fight with the chief counsel, Richard Sprague. Recently, Sprague himself quit and several top aides have left. As far as is known, the 67 member staff hasn't come forward with a single verifiable instance that casts new light on the assassinations.

George McMillan, author of "The Making of an Assassin," says of the committee: "I really don't think they should take things that have been cleared up and talk about them so provocatively when they should know better." Rep. John Dingell (D-Mich.) told the House that the committee report contains "not a smidgin of evidence." Even Sprague, before he quit, told committee members that information collected so far is much "too raw and uncorroborated for us to be stating publicly."

But the committee report has gone public. It states that George de Mohrenschildt, friend of Lee Harvey Oswald, the man charged with assassinating Kennedy, is "an important witness." But the committee never talked with de Mohrenschildt, who came out of a psychiatric ward recently and allegedly said he knew of a plot against Kennedy and who was in it. The other day, de Mohrenschildt killed himself. What does that prove?

The report also focuses on Orest Pena, a New Orleans bar operator. He has changed the testimony he gave to the Warren Commission, which investigated the Kennedy slaying. Pena now says that he saw

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A-10

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Oswald meet several times with an FBI agent. But the agent denies it. And Pena told his story some time ago on a CBS-TV program called "The American Assassins," so it isn't new.

These are just two samples of the kind of stuff that the committee is issuing, giving status to rumors and myths, spreading suspicion and crazy conclusions.

The assassinations have been much in the public eye lately. Some legitimate questions can be raised. There is need for careful investigation to see where the truth lies and to clear up mysteries and doubt. But, unfortunately, the committee so far has not given anyone reason to trust either its judgment or its truthfulness.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Prosecutor Urged As JFK, King Prober

Washington, D.C. — AP — Richard A. Sprague, who resigned under pressure as chief counsel for the House Assassinations Committee, said Monday that President Carter should appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the killings of John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King.

Sprague said he does not believe the House committee can get the facts in either assassination because it "is a political animal."

"They (committee members) play to what they believe to be the public will," he told a news conference. "They play to what they believe will be good press and good headlines."

Sprague resigned as staff director and chief counsel of the committee two weeks ago when it appeared the House would kill the investigation if he remained on the job. After his departure, the House voted, 230 to 181, to continue the probe.

Sprague had become an issue because many members of Congress resented what they saw as a victory for him when Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.) resigned as chairman of the committee in a feud with Sprague.

Sprague said he believes the committee was created before the November elec-

tions to get votes from black people who want the facts on the King assassination "with the idea that it would end after that."

He said he believes President Carter should appoint a special prosecutor with adequate funding and an inde-

pendent staff that would report only after the two investigations were completed.

Turning to aspects of the assassinations, Sprague quoted a J. Edgar Hoover memo as saying some FBI agents

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

A-3
MILWAUKEE SENTINAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 4/12/77
Edition: FINAL
Author:
Editor: R.H. VILLS
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

44-388 - 465

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 12 1977	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

MI ONLY 62-1178
44-388

doubt the man the CIA recorded in Mexico City before President John F. Kennedy's assassination was Lee Harvey Oswald.

Not Embassy Caller

Sprague quoted the late FBI director as saying FBI agents, who knew Oswald's voice, listened to the CIA recordings of a man contacting the Soviet and Cuban embassies in Mexico City before the assassination. "The voice was not Oswald's," they were quoted as saying.

Sprague said the memo was uncovered recently and indicated the FBI agents listened to the tapes after Kennedy was assassinated, contradicting a CIA story that the tapes were erased before the assassination.

Sprague said he did not know what that would mean if true.

"There well could have been a conspiracy that arose after the assassination in which certain agencies felt that it would be an embarrassment to show certain relationships with Oswald," Sprague said. "I don't know."

The Warren Commission

concluded that Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy.

Ray Disputes Version

Sprague quoted James Earl Ray as saying he had outside help in a conspiracy in which King was assassinated — but that there was no "Raoul" as previously claimed by Ray.

Ray has contended repeatedly in the past that he thought he was involved in a gun running operation directed by "Raoul" and did not realize it was a conspiracy to assassinate King until King was killed.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Says CIA Talked of Killing King

Columbus, Ohio — UPI — An inmate at the Ohio Penitentiary Treatment and Reception Center here has claimed he can identify one of two CIA agents he met with nine years ago to discuss with the Mafia the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., it was reported Wednesday.

Scripps-Howard newspapers, in a copyrighted story by William Pillar, said Myron Billett, 52, alias Paul Buccilli, said he would divulge the names of CIA and FBI agents who offered the Mafia \$1 million to kill King only to the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

The ailing convict, who claims he was an undercover agent for the FBI while working for the Mafia, says he has information linking the CIA and FBI with a conspiracy to kill King.

Ed Evans, chief investigator for the Assassinations Committee, told Scripps-Howard newspapers he was ordered to interview Billett by Committee Chairman Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio).

The order came after Scripps-Howard newspapers revealed Billett's intention to testify despite his fears that by doing so he would place his life in jeopardy.

Billett said he was willing to come out of hiding after recent published stories told of alleged conspiracies in the assassinations of both King and President John F. Kennedy.

Billett said he and a woman friend with Mafia ties set up the meeting early in January, 1968, between the CIA and FBI agents with the late Carlo Gambino, who headed one of New York's Mafia families. It was at a hideaway motel in Apalachin, N.Y. Billett said the woman would corroborate his story.

Billett said he was accompanied to the motel by a close associate. Gambino was there with his bodyguard. Two CIA men and only one FBI agent attended the hourlong meeting that ended he said, when the federal operators said, "We'll have to make other arrangements."

Billett quoted Gambino as

saying, "We wouldn't touch the King deal for any amount of money."

Evans told Scripps-Howard that Billett's stature as a witness was heightened by the fact Billett, in letters to the newspaper's Columbus bureau, told of meetings between Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby two weeks before Kennedy was assassinated.

Billett told of the Ruby-Oswald meeting in a letter to the newspapers on Aug. 1, 1976.

"But up to now I didn't think anyone would believe me," Billett said.

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

A-2

Milwaukee Sentinel
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 4/14/77
Edition: Final
Author:
Editor: R.H. Wills
Title:

Character:
or 44-388-466
Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:
☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 15 1977	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

MI. only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Panel Pares, OKs King Probe Budget

A House administration subcommittee Wednesday approved a \$2.5 million budget for the Assassination Committee. Among items cut from the budget request was \$124,800 to pay staff members who took voluntary pay cuts when the panel's status was in jeopardy.

The investigative panel originally asked for \$6.5 million for 1977, but then pruned the request to \$2.6 million to carry out its probes into the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

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

A-10

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wi.

Date: 4/21/77
Edition: Latest
Author: R.H. Leonard
Editor:
Title:

Character:

or

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-467

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>ma</i>	FILED <i>ma</i>
APR 22 1977	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

1-MI-62-1178
1-MI-44-388

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

News in Brief

Reporters May Be Probed

(c)Washington Post Service
Washington, D.C. — The House Assassination Committee may investigate some of the reporters assigned to cover the inquiry into the deaths of President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., according to committee member Walter Fauntroy.

Fauntroy (D-D.C.) said on Sunday's "America's Black Forum" on WMAL-TV, Washington that he especial-

ly was annoyed at some reporters for stories that suggested that the committee had found nothing new in its investigations.

Fauntroy, the chairman of the subcommittee investigating the King assassination, did not name the journalists he had in mind, but he vowed to find out if any of them were CIA agents conspiring to undermine the committee with unfavorable publicity.

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

A-3

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wisc.

4/25/77

Date: Latest

Edition:

Author: R.H. Leonard

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: Milwaukee

Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

1-MI-62-1178
1-MI-44-388

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Says Car Was Being Fixed

Washington, D.C. — UPI — James Earl Ray said Monday he was in a gas station having his car serviced when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was killed.

Ray, who pleaded guilty to the 1968 assassination of the civil rights leader, said in a filmed interview broadcast Monday on ABC's "Good Morning America" that a man named Raoul might be responsible for the murder.

Ray was interviewed in his prison cell at Brushy Mountain Park Prison in Tennessee by Mark Lane, the author

of both King and President Kennedy were the result of conspiracies and not the single deeds of Ray and Lee Harvey Oswald.

Lane appeared on the ABC program and showed parts of his interview with Ray, who is seeking a new trial.

He said Ray may have pleaded guilty as a result of "inhuman, torturous conditions" he was subjected to in prison and that a clue as to the identity of Raoul might be contained in a recent statement by Ray in which he described a calling card

"which may have had the name of a contact for Raoul."

"This card and the story that Ray told me is now being investigated by the House Select Committee on Assassinations," Lane said. The committee itself has interviewed Ray four times so far.

As for his precise movements on April 4, 1968, when King was shot, Ray said:

"At that time, I intended to go to a movie ... I recalled that I had car trouble the day before. I doubled back to service the car. I believe that's close away from the

terminal and where the shooting took place."

After he left the gas station, he said, "I ran into a (police) roadblock in the immediate vicinity of where the shooting was supposed to have taken place. There have been police statements that they waved me off. Anyhow I went to New Orleans."

The FBI, which investigated the King murder and a Justice Department review earlier this year, concluded that all the evidence showed Ray killed King with a rifle he is known to have bought several days before.

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

A-3
MILWAUKEE SENTINAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 5/3/77
Edition: FINAL
Author:
Editor: R.H. WILLS
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE
☐ Being Investigated

44-388-469

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SERIALIZED ☒ FILED ☒

FBI-MILWAUKEE

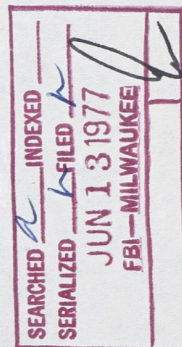
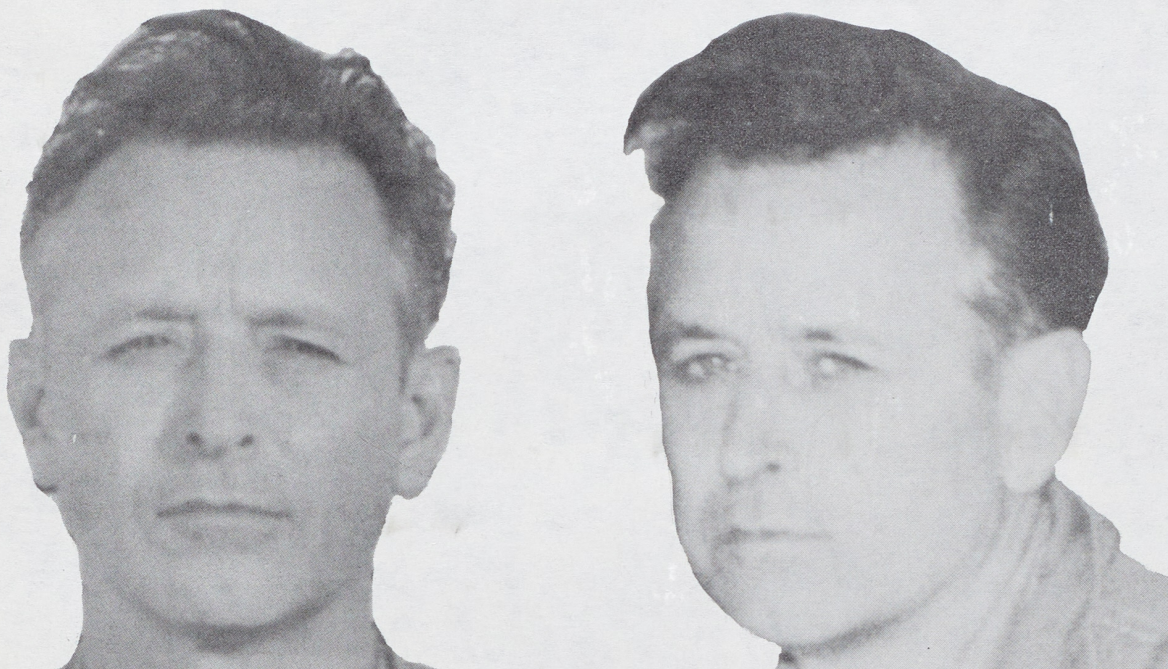
MI ONLY 44-388

WANTED BY THE FBI

CONSPIRACY; INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ESCAPE JAMES EARL RAY

Photographs taken 1975

FBI No. 405,942 G



Aliases: Paul Bridgeman, Eric Starvo Galt, W. C. Herron, Harvey Lowmyer, James McBride, James O'Conner, Raymond George Sneyd, James Walton, James Walyon, John Willard, "Jim," and others.

DESCRIPTION

Age: 49, born March 10, 1928, Quincy or Alton, Illinois (not supported by birth records)

Height: 5'10"

Weight: 170 pounds

Build: Medium

Hair: Black, graying

Occupations: Baker, color matcher, laborer

Scars and Marks: Small scar on center of forehead and small scar on palm of right hand.

Remarks: Noticeably protruding left ear; reportedly a lone wolf; allegedly attended dance instruction school; reportedly completed course in bartending.

Social Security Number Used: 334-22-6876

Eyes: Blue

Complexion: Medium

Race: White

Nationality: American

Fingerprint Classification: 16 M 9 U 000 12 Ref: 9
M 4 W I O I 12

NCIC: 16 13 11 PO 12 12 DI 13 PI 17

CRIMINAL RECORD

Ray has been convicted of murder, burglary, robbery, forging U. S. Postal money orders, armed robbery, operating motor vehicle without owner's consent.

CAUTION

RAY, AT TIME OF ESCAPE, WAS SERVING A NINETY-NINE-YEAR SENTENCE FOLLOWING HIS CONVICTION FOR 1ST DEGREE MURDER WHEREIN A FIREARM WAS USED. CONSIDER ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

A Federal warrant was issued on June 11, 1977, at Knoxville, Tennessee, charging Ray with conspiracy to violate the Unlawful Flight Statute (Title 18, U. S. Code, Section 371, and Title 18, U. S. Code, Section 1073.)

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS PERSON, PLEASE NOTIFY ME OR CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FBI OFFICE. TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES OF ALL FBI OFFICES LISTED ON BACK.

C. M. Kelley

DIRECTOR
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535
TELEPHONE: 202 324-3000

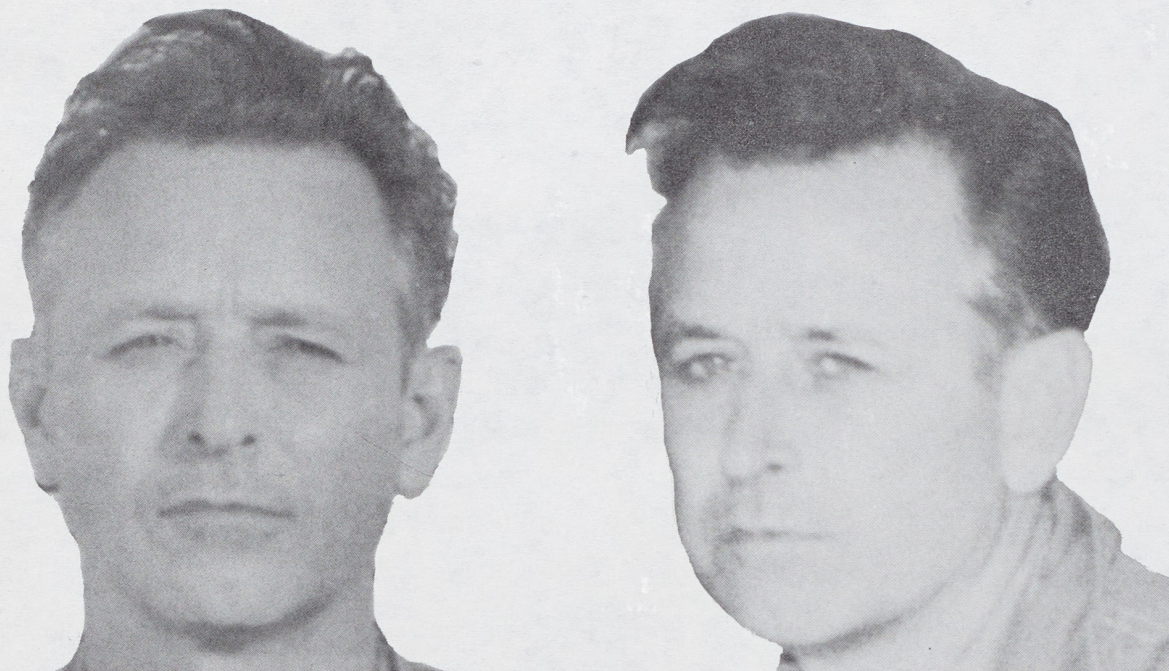
Entered NCIC
Wanted Flyer 500
June 11, 1977

WANTED BY THE FBI

CONSPIRACY; INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ESCAPE JAMES EARL RAY

Photographs taken 1975

FBI No. 405,942 G



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M 4 W I O I 12

NCIC: 16 13 11 PO 12 12 DI 13 PI 17

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

TELEPHONE: 202 324-3000

Entered NCIC

Wanted Flyer 500

June 11, 1977

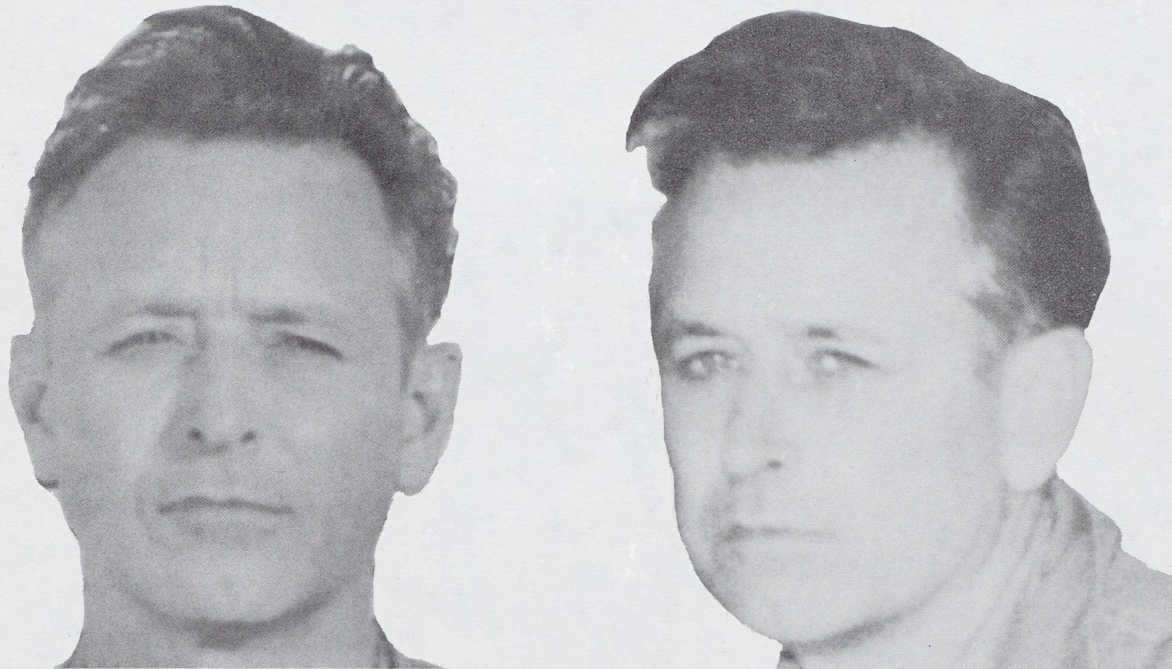
WANTED BY THE FBI

CONSPIRACY; INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ESCAPE

JAMES EARL RAY

Photographs taken 1975

FBI No. 405,942 G



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NCIC: 16 13 11 PO 12 12 DI 13 PI 17

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535
TELEPHONE: 202 324-3000

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Wanted Flyer 500
June 11, 1977

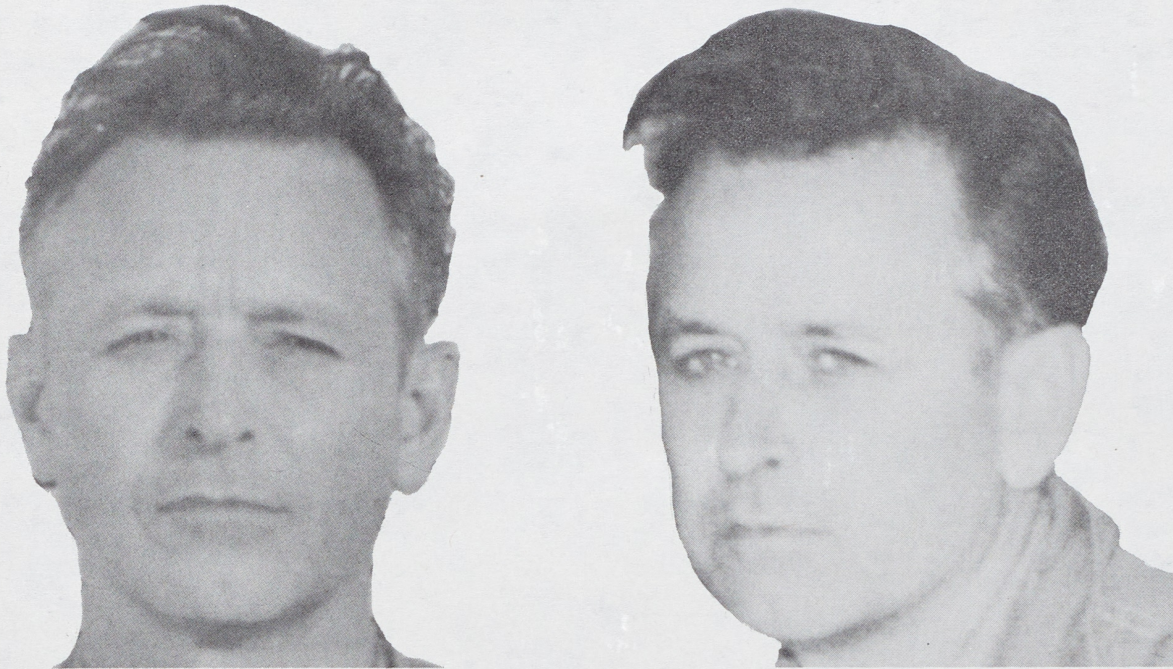
WANTED BY THE FBI

CONSPIRACY; INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ESCAPE

JAMES EARL RAY

Photographs taken 1975

FBI No. 405,942 G



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Connelly

DIRECTOR

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

TELEPHONE: 202 324-3000

Entered NCIC

Wanted Flyer 500

June 11, 1977

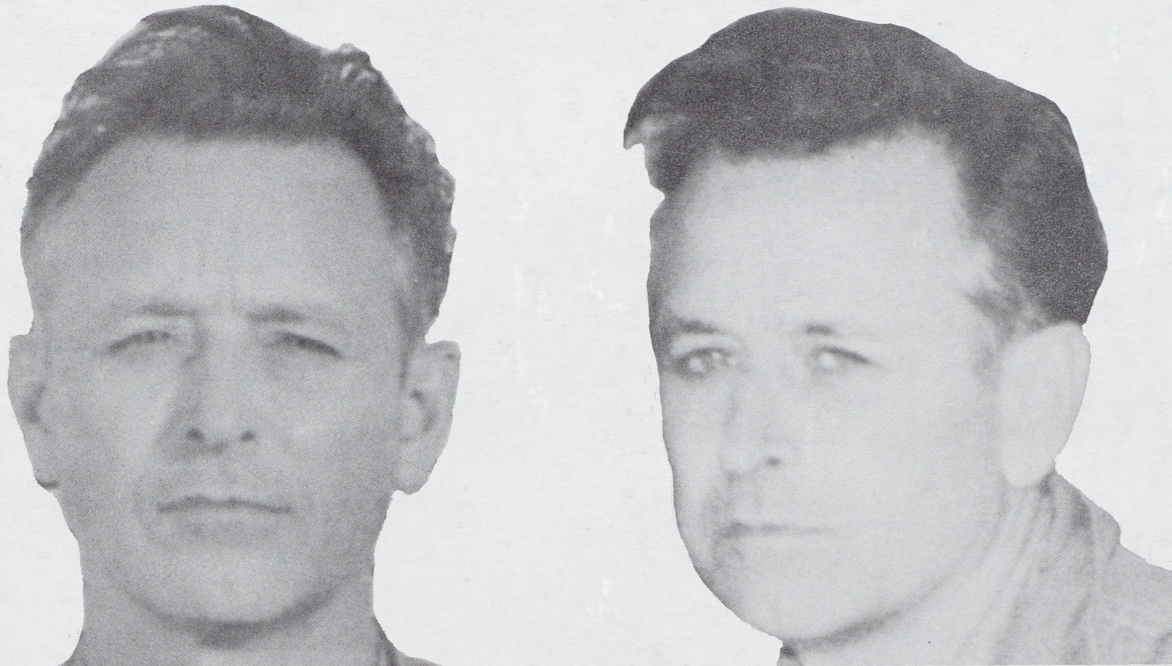
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CONSPIRACY; INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ESCAPE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

TELEPHONE: 202 324-3000

Entered NCIC

Wanted Flyer 500

June 11, 1977

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK-King Panel Finds No New Information

New York Times, AP, UPI

Washington, D.C. — The House Assassinations Committee, which has been in operation for eight months, has come up with virtually no new information or evidence on the deaths of President John F. Kennedy or the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

And the committee has found that much of the so-called new information on which Congress based its decision to reopen the investigations is in error, according to a well placed committee source.

"We certainly have come up with nothing earthshaking," the source said, "and much that witnesses tell us is in conflict with what they supposedly told people who have written books about the assassinations, and who have provided the basic leads for the committee to pursue."

An examination by The New York Times has determined that it was author and lecturer Mark Lane who provided most of the new leads, on the basis of his published works.

Primary Force

According to several officials familiar with the committee's investigation — and Lane himself — Lane was the primary force behind the formation of the committee and the architect of the direction that the investigation should take.

Lane, a former New York State legislator better known for his book "Rush to Judgment," which criticized the official investigations of the Kennedy assassination, had been unsuccessful for two years in trying to get Congress to reopen an investigation into the death of Kennedy in Dallas.

But early last year he began looking into King's death and persuaded the civil rights leader's widow, Coretta King, to solicit support from the Congressional Black Caucus for a reinvestigation of both assassinations.

Timing of Book

Shortly after an investigating committee was formed, Lane and comedian Dick Gregory began work on a book about King and the assassination in Memphis. Lane refused to say how much they received from the publisher as an advance, but it was reported to have been \$100,000.

The book, "Code Name Zorro," was recently published — at about the time that the committee was seeking favorable public and congressional reaction to its request for funds.

From the committee's beginning, staff members, knowing Lane's books, theories and private investigations have provided the "working hypotheses" for the investigation.

Just as the committee almost collapsed in controversy earlier this year, much of the new evidence appears to be falling apart now.

The lack of credible new evidence has been used to explain why the committee has not been able to find a new chief counsel to replace

Richard A. Sprague, who resigned in April in a dispute with the committee chairman at that time, Rep. Henry Gonzales (D-Tex.). Arthur Goldberg, the former Supreme Court justice, and Archibald Cox, the former Watergate special prosecutor, have both declined the post.

And Alvin B. Lewis Jr., acting chief counsel, said Sunday that he was resigning. He gave no reason for stepping down.

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

A-2

Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wisc.

6/6/77

Date: Latest

Edition:

Author:

Editor: R.H. Leonard

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: Milwaukee

Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

1-MI-44-388

1-MI-62-1178

44-388-471

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

James Earl Ray

Escapes

From Sentinel Wire Services:
Petros, Tenn. — James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., broke out of the maximum security Brushy Mountain Prison with five other convicts in a hail of gunfire Friday night and fled into the mountains of northeast Tennessee.

Bloodhounds were set immediately on the trail of three of the fugitives, but it was not known if Ray was one of them.

The Tennessee Highway Patrol said it had reports that "several unidentified subjects were seen in two different freight trains that left the Brushy Mountain area, one headed toward Danville, Va., and the other toward Chattanooga."

Seven convicts tried to escape, but one of them was shot off the wall of the grim, fortress-like prison and captured.

The captured convict, bank robber Jerry Ward, was taken to a hospital at Oak Ridge for treatment. A hospital official said Ward was shouting:

"James Earl Ray got out! Ray got out!"

Ray broke out of Brushy Mountain on his third try, little more than eight years after he pleaded guilty to the April 4, 1968, murder of King in Memphis.

The escape occurred during the evening recreation period about 8 p.m., according to Brooks Parker, a spokesman for Gov. Ray Blanton.

"The prisoners escaped using a homemade ladder made out of lightning conduit (wire). One has been captured and there are still six at large. One of them is James Earl Ray," Parker said.

Three of Ray's companions, Parker said, were murderers.

FBI agents, not waiting for an invitation, rushed to the prison 40 miles northeast of Knoxville.

Warden Davis informs me that the search underway

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

A-1

Milwaukee Sentinel
 Milwaukee, Wisc.

6/11/77

Date: Final

Edition:

Author: R.H. Wills

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: Milwaukee
 Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-472
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FBI—MILWAUKEE

1-MI-88-New

MI-44-388

is made up of 125 correctional officers, 10 highway patrolmen, two FBI men on the scene, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation agents and local law enforcement officers from Morgan County," said Parker.

"At the present time, prison bloodhounds are in pursuit of three of the six escapees. The warden is having a standby team of dogs brought in."

In Washington, President Carter personally telephoned Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell Friday night asking to be kept informed on progress in the search for Ray, a White House spokesman said.

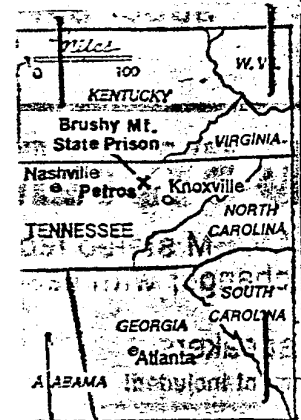
Other prisoners still at large were identified as David Lee Powell of Shelby County, Tenn., serving 99 years for murder; Earl Hill Jr., serving two life sentences for murder; Donald Ray Taylor, serving 51 years for armed robbery and other convictions; and Douglas Shelton, serving sentences for murder, felonious assault and grand larceny.

In Atlanta, Ralph Abernathy, a close associate of King, said Friday he believes Ray's escape is a move to set Ray up to "be destroyed."

"I am greatly outraged over this news. I firmly am convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that James Earl Ray has not escaped but is part of a plan," Abernathy said.

King was felled by a single shot as he stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn., on the evening of April 4, 1968.

An intensive manhunt soon focused on Ray, then a fugitive from the Missouri State Prison. He was arrested at London's Heathrow Airport on June 5.



On March 10, 1969, after shuffling through several attorneys and winding up with noted defense lawyer Percy Foreman, Ray entered a guilty plea and was sentenced to 99 years. There was no testimony.

Almost from the moment he entered prison, Ray began protesting his conviction, saying his attorneys railroaded him. He claimed he was working for a man named "Raoul," who he thought was a gunrunner, and had been set up to take the blame for the killing.

The government claimed he killed King with a rifle aimed through the bathroom window of a flophouse. The rifle was found in a bag by the door of the building.

Ray's efforts for a new trial were rejected by one court after another, although there were many unexplained facets to the case — such as where he got the money to flee to, and around, Europe after the killing.

He told investigators from the House Assassinations Committee in five meetings at the prison this year that he never fired the shot that killed King.

He claimed "Raoul" had told him to go to a movie that afternoon. When the shot was fired, Ray claimed, he was getting the spare tire of his car fixed.



JAMES EARL RAY

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

King Assassin Eludes Hunters

AP and UPI
Petros, Tenn. — James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., was being hunted Saturday along with five other fugitives after their escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison in eastern Tennessee.

"We'll do our best to bring him back one way or the other," said state Correction Commissioner C. Murray Henderson.

The Friday night escape, Henderson said, was obviously well planned and took the prisoners about 10 minutes to carry out. They climbed over the prison's 10 foot high stone wall, beneath a 2,300-volt power line, and between two guard towers 70 feet apart.

A mock fight between two other inmates distracted guards during the escape. However, a seventh fugitive — bank robber Jerry

James Earl Ray during an interview last month.

Ward — was shot in the leg as he scaled the wall on a makeshift ladder of light



pipe. One of the fugitives had access to the pipe because he worked in the prison plumbing shop, Henderson said.

The wounded prisoner was recaptured immediately and treated at a hospital in nearby Oak Ridge for a leg wound inflicted by a .22 caliber rifle bullet.

At the hospital, Ward repeated to anyone who approached: "James Earl Ray got out! Ray is out!"

Henderson said officials had the fugitives "pretty well boxed in" with guards, bloodhounds, state troopers, FBI agents and agents of the Tennessee Bureau of Criminal Identification.

"We have the whole area staked out and I just don't see how they could get out," Henderson said.

He also said two highway

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patrol helicopters would join the search.

President Carter ordered US Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell to give state officials whatever assistance he could and FBI Director Clarence Kelley ordered his agents into the case Friday night.

Guards said it was virtually impossible to remain a fugitive for long from the isolated prison, 40 miles northwest of Knoxville. They say the only two ways out are across a rugged, rattlesnake infested mountain — the route chosen by the fugitives — or down a road past Warden Stoney Lane's house through Petros.

State troopers, manned at least four roadblocks on that road, and guards with bloodhounds tracked the fugitives on three separate trails through the mountains.

Officials speculated that the prisoners split into two groups after going over the wall.

Freight Trains Checked

I would assume Ray would want to get away from the others as soon as he could and they would want to

get away from him because he's too hot," Henderson said.

Don Daugherty, a guard handling four bloodhounds, said, "We got close enough that we could hear them in the woods, but they got away."

Freight trains moving near the area also were checked.

King, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his civil rights activities, was shot on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis April 4, 1968.

Ray, now 49, was arrested two months later in London, England, where he had fled after leaving a rifle with his fingerprints outside a Memphis rooming house, across from the Lorraine Motel.

Ray pleaded guilty to the shooting and was sentenced on March 10, 1969, to 99 years in prison.

Almost immediately, however, he sought to recant his admission in the King slaying, claiming he was a dupe in a conspiracy to kill King that involved a mysterious "Raoul" whose last name he did not know. In any case, he claimed, he did not pull the King murder trigger.

He has stuck, basically, to this story during a hearing in Memphis to gain a new trial and, more recently, in interviews with representatives of the House Assassination Committee from Washington.

The committee is looking into the assassinations of King and President John F. Kennedy.

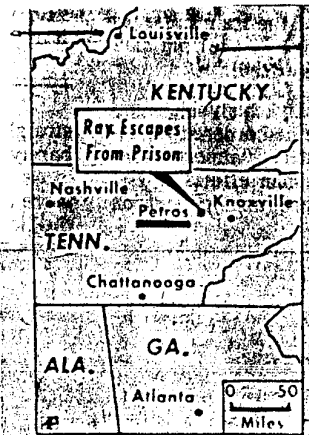
Others who escaped with Ray were identified as Donald Ray Taylor, Douglas Shelton, David Lee Powell, Earl Hill Jr. and Larry Edward Hacker.

Four of the five reportedly were serving time for murder.

Becca Cottrill, information officer for the state prison system, said the fugitives included "some of the real mean ones."

The escape was set up by the mock fight in the prison yard by two other inmates, one of whom feigned a leg fracture, officers said.

As guards went to break up the disturbance, officials said, one of them saw Ward scaling the wall on the ladder fashioned from conduit, a kind of pipe through which electrical wire is run. Shots



—AP Wirephoto

James Earl Ray and five others escaped from Brushy Mountain State Prison.

were fired, and Ward was felled and recaptured immediately.

But, according to officials, by the time Ward was seen the others had disappeared into the dense, wooded hills behind the white, stone prison.

3rd Escape Attempt

It was Ray's third attempt to escape from Brushy — the others were in 1971 and 1972 — but the first time he got outside the walls.

In Nashville, Ray's lawyer, Jack Kershaw, speculated that Ray might have been kidnaped from Brushy and did not go willingly.

Ray Escape Feeds Fears of Plot to Silence Him

UPI, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, New York Times, and others. With speculation growing that the escape of James Earl Ray might have been arranged to prevent him from telling what he knew about the assassination of Martin Luther King, authorities were making every effort Saturday to capture him alive.

Tennessee Gov. Ray Blanton ordered police and guards to "use all possible restraint" in capturing Ray and four other Brushy Mountain State Prison escapees still at large.

"The extenuating circumstances regarding the congressional and other investigations of the James Earl Ray case make it imperative that he be returned to custody safely and at the earliest possible moment," Blanton said.

Various people familiar with the King assassination investigation suggested that conspirators in the assassination might have engineered the prison break, perhaps

even with the idea of killing Ray to silence him.

However, Atty. Gen. Percy Foreman, the man responsible for Ray's initial guilty plea in the 1968 King slaying, said he thought Ray, who had been in trouble with the law since his youth, was simply making good on a vow he made long ago.

This was his third escape attempt since his conviction, and the first possibly successful one, Foreman noted. He said Ray had predicted that he would escape within two

years of starting his sentence and almost true to the prediction, made his first attempt in May, 1971.

Ray escaped with five others Friday night from the state prison near Petros in the eastern Tennessee mountains.

One of the other escapees, David Lee Powell, the only black among the escapees, surrendered to authorities Saturday, apparently exhausted after 18 hours on the run. Two other escapees were sighted with Powell by police in a helicopter, but they eluded capture.

It was announced that Powell did not seem to have been in on the escape plot, but apparently seized the opportunity to climb a makeshift pipe ladder and escape over the prison wall. It was not known if others had also acted on impulse.

Some of those who believe there was a conspiracy to kill King are speculating that the conspiracy might now include Ray's escape.

One such believer is Jack Kershaw, Ray's present lawyer, who said that the fact that Ray had been hopeful of winning a new trial had led him to believe "we may not be dealing with an escape but an abduction."

Kershaw said he knew that members of the underworld were unhappy that Ray planned to talk to the House Assassination Committee and in court.

The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, who succeeded King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and has since resigned,

said, he was convinced the escape was a move to set Ray up to be "destroyed."

"I really believe that the prison officials, authorities in very high places, have planned the escape," he said. "I am just greatly outraged."

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, who was with King when he was killed and now heads Operation PUSH, said he was sure that Ray "will be killed by those who helped him get out of jail."

One who worries about conspiracy but would not go as far as to suggest that Ray might have been freed in order to silence him was Walter Fauntroy, the nonvoting member of Congress from the District of Columbia who heads the House committee looking into King's assassination.

Fauntroy said Ray told the panel that he did not kill King but suggested he was part of a conspiracy in the death.

"If there were no conspiracy," Fauntroy said, "he would be in no danger. If there were a conspiracy, he would be in danger. I don't

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know if he is in danger or not. I just have questions." The chairman of the full committee, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), said the panel would conduct its own investigation of the escape.

Richard Sprague, who interviewed Ray before being fired as the committee's chief counsel, said he believed that Ray was a participant in the assassination and that others were involved.

"Let's just say it is very important that, in capturing him, that he be captured alive — that the officials not shoot him," Sprague said. "Obviously, if something happens to him, it will feed speculation and rumor tremendously."

Powell, who was serving 100 years for murder, looked tired and strained as he was put into a patrol car. He slumped into the back seat and was taken back to the prison for questioning.

Officials said bloodhounds were pursuing a hot trail of the others. They hoped the dogs' activity would keep the fugitives running and exhaust them.

Lawmen believed they had Ray and his cohorts hemmed into a five-mile square area around the prison, but at midday they expanded the search area to a 10-mile radius.

Helicopters with infra-red detection devices were pressed into the manhunt, and FBI agents were brought in from Atlanta and Knoxville to bolster the army of prison guards and state and local police.

Other prisoners helped set the stage for the break. While some convicts lobbed horse-shoes and batted around a volleyball during the evening recreation period, a fight broke out near the basketball area.

There was confusion, and in a flash a ladder fashioned from pieces of water pipe was put up against the prison wall, which is about 12 feet high in the recreation area and Ray and the other scrambled up.

—AP Wirephoto.
 Deputy Warden Herman Davis showed the shift-ladder James Earl Ray used to escape.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Life of Crime

The arrest record of James Earl Ray stretches back to 1949, when he was convicted of stealing a typewriter in Los Angeles at age 21.

He later served time at the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kan., and in 1959 was convicted of robbing a St. Louis grocery store and sentenced to the Missouri State Prison.

Here is a chronology of what is known of the Ray case since his escape on April 23, 1967, from the Missouri prison in Jefferson City.

April 4, 1968: The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Memphis.

June 5, 1968: Ray arrested in London.

March 10, 1969: Pleads guilty, sentenced without trial to 99 years.

March 13, 1969: Changes story and denies firing the shot that killed King. Says he was in Memphis on instructions of a man named Raoul, and thought he was involved in gun running scheme.

May, 1971: Escapes from cell at Brushy Mountain State Prison, but is recaptured 15 minutes later.

Feb. 5, 1972: Attempts to escape from work area at Brushy Mountain, but fails and is sentenced to 30 days in a disciplinary cell.

Nov. 22, 1975: Ray's attorneys ask 6th US Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati to grant Ray a trial.

May 10, 1976: Appeal rejected.

March 16, 1977: Ray says he may be willing to testify before House Assassination Committee.

March 23, 1977: Ray meets with House committee investigators at Brushy Mountain — first of five such meetings.

May 4, 1977: Ray's lawyer says Ray gave House committee investigators name of man who could place him at a service station when King was shot. But the man, Willie Green, says he can't.

June 10, 1977: Ray escapes.

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Third Caught; Ray Still at Large

From Sentinel Wire Services

Petros, Tenn. — Investigators searching for James Earl Ray Sunday night recaptured a third fugitive of the five inmates who fled Brushy Mountain State Prison with him.

But Ray, confessed assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., remained at large.

Earl Hill Jr., Ray's cellmate who was convicted of two murders, rape and assault to commit murder, was recaptured about 10:30 p.m. Milwaukee time.

Earlier Sunday, searchers found the alleged mastermind of the escape hiding in a tiny church, but there still was no trace of Ray — again at the top of the FBI's "most wanted" list — more than 48 hours after he went over the wall at Brushy Mountain State Prison with five other convicts.

Gov. Ray Blanton Sunday night ordered 150 Tennessee National Guardsmen into the search for Ray.

The warden of Brushy Mountain State Prison selected a special squad of six mountaineer guards to pursue Ray and two other fugitives who escaped from the prison Friday.

Blanton said half the men would fly helicopter sur-

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veriance and the other half would relieve state troopers, prison guards and local police who have been on duty since Ray and five others escaped.

Warden Stoney Lane said searchers believe Ray and one of the remaining fugitives were using cautious hide-and-seek tactics through the densely wooded Cumberland Mountains, while the third man, Douglas Ray Caylor, had broken from the group in full flight. A federal agent and two sheriff's deputies recaptured Larry E. Hacker, 32, believed by state officials to have been the ringleader of the Friday night escape. Hacker, serving two 28-year prison terms for armed robbery,

was arrested about 1 a.m. Milwaukee time at rural Beech Grove Baptist Church about four miles east of the prison during a routine check of the church.

Another of the fugitives — convicted murderer David Lee Powell, 27, the only black among the escapees — surrendered Saturday to a Tennessee Highway Patrol helicopter crew in an open field near Wartburg.

Still at large with Ray, 49, were convicted murderer Douglas Shelton, 32, and Caylor, 24, convicted of armed robbery and attempted murder.

More than 175 law enforcement officials expanded

their search area to snake infested mountainous terrain on all sides of the prison. That covers about 2,000 square miles, including the Tennessee communities of Wartburg, Oliver Springs and Coalfield.

The searchers, using bloodhounds and helicopters, fanned out over rugged terrain within a 25 mile radius of Brushy Mountain State Prison Sunday in a wider hunt for Ray and the three other convicts.

Officials said a brief afternoon shower increased the chance bloodhounds would pick up the scent of the men in the thickly wooded area around the maximum security prison. The area had not had significant rain for several weeks.

"The dog handlers tell me moist ground holds a scent better than dry ground," a prison spokesman said.

One car was stolen and a second was broken into at two motels at Caryville, about 20 miles from the prison, but police refused to say whether there was a possible link to the Ray escape.

Police said a camera and some other valuables were ignored, but a shirt and pair of trousers were taken in the auto break-in at another motel parking lot adjoining the scene of the car theft.

Blanton briefed US Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell on the search by telephone and then repeated his order that law enforcement personnel "should use all possible caution and restraint" to insure that Ray, convicted assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., is returned to custody safely.

State officials believed Hacker led the escape plot because of a previous breakout from another Tennessee prison and his connections on the outside.

Jim Gilchrist, a spokesman for Blanton, said the apprehension of Hacker was a "big break" in the case.

Gilchrist said because Hacker was found near the prison, there was hope Ray and the others were still in the area. He said it was generally believed "that if Larry Hacker had made it out of the dense forest around here, then Ray . . . the others might have, too."

He added: "If anybody had the money and the connections to get away, it probably was Hacker."

Gilchrist called Hacker "very shrewd, a professional criminal." Hacker previously escaped from the state's main prison in Nashville and was at one time associated with the notorious "Dawson Gang" of bank robbers that plundered several Southern states in the mid-1970s.