

JFK-King Panel: \$5 Million Spent, Little to Show for It

Los Angeles Times Service

Washington, D.C. — Despite a tedious, expensive and far ranging investigation, a blue ribbon congressional committee has uncovered no significant evidence of conspiracy in the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy or the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., according to dozens of sources interviewed by the Los Angeles Times.

Black leaders were principally responsible for creation of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, reflecting a strong belief among blacks that James Earl Ray did not act alone in the 1968 assassination of King.

But the committee has developed little about the King murder not already known to Tennessee law enforcement agencies or anything substantial not known to the Warren Commission years ago about the 1963 Kennedy slaying.

To No Avail

Interviews and examinations of committee records show that the committee and its investigators have labored mightily to unearth evidence of conspiracies in both murders — but to no avail. During its 20 month investigation, the committee has:

Spent almost \$5 million on staff salaries, travel and expenses and wages for consultants, including ballistics, forensic and medical experts.

Interviewed nearly 1,500 witnesses.

Examined voluminous documents, some hitherto secret, dealing with prior investigations of both assassinations.

Expended extensive efforts rechecking old leads discredited by prior investigators and chasing after what conspiracy buffs — most particularly attorney and author Mark Lane — call "new evidence."

Some of the "new evidence" has turned out largely to be an assortment of flimsy rumor, distortion and plain untruth.

Witnesses who were interviewed often have termed some committee investigators "bumbling" and "naive." Alabama author William Bradford Huie, who wrote a book about Ray and is considered an expert on the King assassination, was one of several witnesses who said the investigators at times appeared more interested in justifying their salaries than in pursuing the investigation.

No Smoking Gun

Donovan Gay, the committee's \$38,500 chief researcher from its inception in September, 1976, until early this year, said:

"The thing that is frustrating to the staff (lawyers and investigators) is that they haven't found that smoking gun. They just are not able to find that smoking gun. I'm not saying it's not out there."

Gay said he left the job because his talents were no longer being fully utilized by the committee.

Some say that clarifying unsubstantiated rumors and exaggerations by conspiracy buffs may turn out to be the committee's principal service to the American public.

Rep. Harold Ford, a Democratic committee member from Memphis, Tenn., where King was murdered, said in recent Memphis interview:

"I'm very pleased at the

way the committee is moving. In the latter part of July or August, when we open up to the media, I think the American people will be pleased as well. ... We are going to close it out, lay the facts before the American people."

Ford placed emphasis on the phrase "close it out."

It remains to be seen, however, if Americans will be satisfied with the committee's findings. A final report is due Dec. 31.

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

A-8

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 6/1/78
Edition: Latest
Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:
or

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-511

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

JUN 1 1978

FBI - MILWAUKEE

FBI/DOJ

1-MI-62-1178

1-MI-44-388

KING, MARTIN LUTHER JR. 12-75 66-2223*
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW
COST DATA

KING, MARTIN LUTHER JR 4-76 80-780-32
80-780-32-A

RESPONSE TO CRITICISM OF FBI
CONCERNING ACTIONS
TAKEN AGAINST MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

KING, MARTIN LUTHER (JR.) 7/71 1

REV
see MARTIN LUTHER KING for references

KING, MARTIN LUTHER (REV.) 5/63 157-112*
~~100-11982-213~~
Assassination of 157-514* 5/63 100-14204-1
Commeration of death of 6/63 100-14120-76
4-4-69 157-696* 6/63 100-14207-87 p.1
Commeration of Death of 4/67 157-0-226 -19
4-4-71 157-1454* 4/68 100-15476-77
12/75 66-2223* 5/66 157-1885-4
6/75 157-138-2 4x68x28
10/65 100-14256-15,27
(FILE IN SAC OFF.) 3/68 100-15476-75
4/68 25-10188-1 (2)
4/68 25-10188-1 (50)

F

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Martin King 31-2494 #21*
Martin Luther King (Jr.) 44-388 I*
see attached

Black Mayors Seek FBI Files on Leaders

Search- Prichard, Ala. —AP— The National Conference of Black Mayors, expressing outrage over reports that the FBI tried to replace the late Martin Luther King Jr. as leader of the civil rights movement, is asking to see FBI files on black leaders.

A.J. Cooper, mayor of Prichard and president of the conference, said Monday that telegrams had been sent to Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell and FBI Director William H. Webster requesting a meeting to discuss the files.

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

— A-6
 MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 6/6/78
 Edition: LATEST

Title:

Character:
 or

Classification:
 Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-512

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 6 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

FBI/DOJ

MI ONLY

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Police & Courts

Federal marshals pulled a brother of James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin of Martin Luther King Jr., out of a halfway house in St. Louis this week and put him back in jail to await an investigation of a complaint that he lied to the House Assassinations Committee. US Parole Commission officials said they decided to delay the parole of John L. Ray — who had been scheduled to be released from the halfway house Friday — on the strength of allegations from the committee's chief counsel, G. Robert Blakey. John Ray was being held on bank robbery charges.

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 6/17/78
Edition: Latest
Author:
Editor:
Title:

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

44-388-513

SEARCHED.....	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED.....	FILED.....
JUN 17 1978	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

MI only

FBI/DOJ

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The House Assassinations Committee has released a set of photographs and composite drawings in hope citizen recognition of them might shed additional light on the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Sketch A (left) shows a man who reportedly represented himself as a member of the US intelligence community in the 1960s and who occasionally used the name Maurice Bishop. Sketch B (right) shows a man, first name of Ralph, who allegedly was in Atlanta, Ga. in 1967 or early 1968. The photographs were of poor quality.

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

A-9

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 7/31/78
Edition: Final
Author:
Editor:
Title:

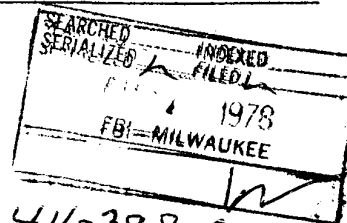
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Classification:

Submitting Office: Milwaukee

☐ Being Investigated



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

FBI/DOJ



HELP REQUESTED — The House Select Committee on Assassinations released two sketches Sunday in hopes that citizen recognition of them might help shed light on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.



UPI Photos
At left is a man who represented himself as a member of the intelligence community in the 1960s and used the name Maurice Bishop. The other sketch shows a man named Ralph who allegedly was in Atlanta, Ga., in 1967 or 1968.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Conspiracy Panel Asks Public's Help

Washington, D.C. —UPI— Americans were asked Monday to identify blurred photographs and sketches of several men who may be connected to the murders of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

The House Assassinations Committee made public Sunday two composite drawings and three blurred photographs.

In doing so, it said it hoped "to make best possible use of available pictorial evidence... in the hope that citizen recognition of them might shed additional light on the assassinations."

Anyone recognizing any of the men has been asked to contact the House Assassination Committee, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Documented linking of any

of the men to the cases would directly challenge the conclusion of the Warren Commission that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy in Dallas in 1963, as well as raise questions about the guilty plea made by James Earl Ray that he murdered King in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968.

Ray Wants New Trial

Ray, who is in prison for the slaying, has changed his story and has long sought a new trial.

Formed in late 1976 to investigate rumors of conspiracies in the murders, the panel so far has failed to come up with anything concrete to dispute the lone-assassin theses.

A series of public hearings on both cases is scheduled to begin soon.

The three photographs released Sunday include a blurred image of a dark haired man, possibly with mustache, sitting on a curb with a group, none of whose faces can be seen. The committee caption said only that the picture was taken near the scene of the Dallas shooting "moments after President Kennedy was shot."

The other photographs, according to the committee, are "of two men who may have been in Mexico City in the fall of 1963 when Lee Harvey Oswald... was there."

2 Sketches

One shows a handsome, apparently light haired man in his 20s or early 30s. He appears to be wearing a jacket over a dark turtleneck sweater or pullover.

The other photograph, badly scratched and blurred, is a profile view of a light or gray haired man who could be in his late 40s or 50s. He wears a light suit, shirt and tie. The face of a man standing to his left is obscured.

One of the two sketches shows a middle aged, dark haired, square-jawed man with high cheekbones "who allegedly was in Atlanta in 1967 or 1968." The sketch carries the label "Ralph."

The other drawing shows a man with close cropped hair. The committee said the man "reportedly represented himself as a member of the U.S. intelligence community in the 1960s and... on occasion used the name Maurice Bishop."

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

C-9

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 7/31/78
Edition: Latest
Author:
Editor:
Title:

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

SEARCHED.....	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED.....	FILED.....
JUL 1 1978	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

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

44-388-515 FBI/DOJ

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Ray Payoff Alleged in King Death

(c) New York Times Service

Washington, D.C. — The FBI received a report in March, 1974, that an Imperial (Mo.) businessman was "the individual who made the payoff of James Earl Ray after the killing" of the Rev. Martin Luther King, according to bureau documents made public Wednesday.

The documents, released under the Freedom of Information Act to Harold Weissberg, a private investigator of assassination matters, and The New York Times, included the 1971 report of an informant to his FBI control agent, which had been written by the agent.

It was based upon the informant's conversation with Russell G. Byers, a onetime St. Louis auto parts dealer who is now a witness before the House Select Committee on Assassinations. The Times reported last week that Byers had told the committee that two Imperial men had offered him \$50,000 to kill King and that he had turned down the offer.

Payoff Alleged

But the documents released Wednesday showed that in 1973 Byers told an FBI informant that one of these two men was the person who paid off Ray after King's murder on April 4, 1968. Ray is serving a 99 year sentence in Tennessee for the killing. He has said, after initially pleading guilty, that he did not shoot the black leader.

The bureau memorandum noted that "during the fall of 1973 (lengthy deletion) Byers (the name was misspelled) talked freely about himself and his business, and they later went to (short

deletion) where Beyers told a story about visiting a lawyer in St. Louis County, now deceased, not further identified, who had offered to give him a contract to kill Martin Luther King." The memorandum continued:

"He said that also present was a short stocky man, who walked with a limp. Later, with regard to the actual individual, Beyers commented that this man was actually the individual who made the payoff of James Earl Ray after the killing."

Confederate Flags

According to the memorandum:

"Beyers said he had declined to accept this contract. He did remark that this lawyer had Confederate flags and other items about the house that might indicate he was 'a real rebel.' Beyers also commented that he had been offered either \$10,000 or \$20,000 to kill King."

There is no indication that Byers presented any corroboration for the charge that Ray was paid.

In an interview with a New York Times reporter on July 18, Byers confirmed that he met with John H. Sutherland, a patent lawyer from Imperial, and John R. Kauffmann, a onetime stockbroker, in late 1966 or early 1967 and that they offered him \$50,000 for the King murder. He did not disclose in the interview that he believed that Kauffmann had actually paid Ray after the crime. He said he turned down the offer.

Both Sutherland and Kauffmann are dead, and their widows have said they did not believe their late husbands would have become involved in such a plot. Byers told this story to persons in 1968 and again in 1973.

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

A-7

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/3/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388-516

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Jesse Jackson Acts on Ray

Chicago, Ill. —AP— The Rev. Jesse Jackson has opened his own investigation into Martin Luther King's murder, spurred by a letter



Jesse Jackson

from James Earl Ray and what he called a threat of death hanging over everyone present at the killing.

Jackson, who asked permission Thursday to interview Ray at Tennessee's Bushy Mountain prison, said he was convinced Ray did not act alone. "There are still evil forces at large," he said.

Ray denied in his letter to Jackson and others that he killed King and offered evidence "about how I was used." He asked to be tried for the assassination, to which he originally pleaded guilty.

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

B-3

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/4/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388-517

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 11 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	
FBI/DOJ	

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Jesse Jackson Afraid, Probes King Slaying

Chicago, Ill. — AP — The Rev. Jesse Jackson has opened his own investigation into the killing of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. because "the threat of death hangs over everyone present at the assassination."

Prompted by a letter from James Earl Ray, Jackson asked permission Thursday to interview the confessed assassin at Tennessee's Brushy Mountain Prison.

"I fear greatly for his life," Jackson said. "I fear greatly for my own life."

He said he is convinced Ray "didn't act alone and there are still evil forces at large."

Jackson, now head of Operation PUSH in Chicago, was on a motel room balcony in Memphis, Tenn., with King when the civil rights leader was shot April 4, 1968.

The New York Times reported Thursday that an FBI document shows a Missouri businessman made a payment to Ray after the assassination, but the FBI never pursued the lead.

The Times reported that the document says the FBI's information came from Russell Byers, a former St. Louis auto parts dealer. Government sources told the Times that Byers named John Kauffmann, a stockbroker who died in 1974, as the man who made the payment.

Byers had confirmed to the Times that he told the House Assassinations Committee he turned down a \$50,000 offer from Kauffmann and a Missouri lawyer to arrange the killing of King.

Ray, now 50, pleaded guilty and was sent to prison for 99 years. But since then he repeatedly has claimed his innocence.

On Tuesday, Jackson sent a telegram to President Carter in an effort to obtain a new trial for Ray.

He said Thursday that a trial would force the FBI to disclose information "that it considers irrelevant or confidential. Those are value judgments that could be colored by the FBI's possible role in the assassination or the FBI's failure to prevent it."

Jackson added, "Because he did not act alone, others involved are still walking the street. Ray is our closest lead to those people."

Ray's letter to Jackson, dated July 21, said: "I did not kill Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

"I believe the evidence that I can give you about how I was used, moved around the country, paid substantial sums of money, directed to buy a rifle and directed to report to Memphis on April 4, 1968, will be helpful in establishing the fact that there was a conspiracy to murder Dr. King."

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

A-2

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/4/78
Edition: Final

Title:

Character:

or
Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388-518

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	
FBI/DOJ	

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Warden Stonney Lane confirmed Thursday that he received information within the last few months that James Earl Ray might be plotting another escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison in Petros, Tenn. Ray, who is serving 99 years for the murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., escaped June 10, 1977, with six other inmates. NBC News reported Thursday that the new escape plot was discovered by Oliver Patterson, a congressional informant, who stole letters from Ray to his brother, Jerry Ray.

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/10/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

44-388-519
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

AUG 11 1978

FBI-MILWAUKEE

FBI/DOJ

2-Milwaukee
1-88-7126
1-44-388

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Jackson Doubts Ray Killed King

Petros, Tenn. — UPI — The Rev. Jesse Jackson, the civil rights leader who was with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. when he was slain, met with James Earl Ray behind bars Thursday and later said he had "profound doubt" the convicted assassin actually killed King.

"If given a new trial, he (Ray) would reveal the names and information that would lead the police to the real killers of Martin Luther King," said Abernathy, a civil rights leader who also was with King the day he was assassinated.

"I am convinced that he was involved but was not alone," said Jackson.

In another development in the case, Ralph Abernathy told the Memphis Commercial Appeal that he would testify at a congressional hearing next week that he believes the FBI and Memphis

Ray, serving a 99 year term at Brushy Mountain State Prison, initially pleaded guilty to the crime, but has since changed his story and contends he was not the trigger man.

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

B-12

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/11/78
Edition: Final
Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:
or
Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-520

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 12 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	
FBI/DOJ	

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Illegalities in King Probe Denied

Washington, D. C. —UPI— The House Assassinations Committee Thursday denied on the strength of a preliminary investigation that any of its investigators or staff used illegal methods in probing the murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

G. Robert Blakey, the committee's chief counsel, read a statement to reporters that denied allegations made by one of the panel's former

investigators Monday at a news conference.

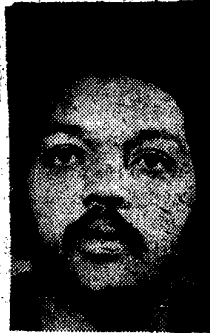
Oliver Patterson, who described himself as an undercover agent for the House panel, said he had tape recorded telephone calls to Jerry Ray, brother of convicted King slayer James Earl Ray, on the advice of his superior in the congressional investigation.

In his statement, Blakey said the individual making the charges "had never been an employee of the committee," although he at one time had made a statement under oath to the panel.

Blakey said the committee "will continue to conduct a complete investigation of the allegations."

Meanwhile, civil rights leader Jesse Jackson emerged from a talk with James Earl Ray at a Tennessee penitentiary and said he had a profound doubt that Ray was the killer of King.

Jackson said he had called Benjamin Civiletti, the deputy attorney general, and told him that a new trial for Ray would be in the national interest because there were still strong doubts about the



Jesse Jackson

FBI's true role in King's assassination.

He said:

"The FBI followed Dr. King 24 hours a day. The motives of the FBI are far greater than this man's (Ray's) motives."

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/11/78
Edition: Latest
Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-521
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

AUG 12 1978

FBI - MILWAUKEE

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

New Trial for Ray Could End Doubts

By JESSE L. JACKSON

LAST WEEK I received a letter from James Earl Ray, the alleged assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. In that letter he said several important things which I would like to share with the American public. The following are the first two paragraphs and a section from the last paragraph of Ray's letter:

"I did not kill Martin Luther King Jr.

"I believe that the evidence that I can give you about how I was used, moved around the country, paid substantial sums of money, directed to

vent the rise of a black messiah" and that they were to "disrupt, discredit or otherwise destroy the black movement in America" are just some indication of the depth of Hoover's hatred. Tapes and letters sent by the FBI to the Rev. and Mrs. King and others were designed to harass and undermine his character and credibility. Another recent memo showing an amateurish attempt by the FBI to "create a leader to replace the Rev. King" is indicative of their mentality at the time.

The circumstantial evidence continues to point to the involvement of others, especially the FBI, in the King assassination in either an active or a passive role — actions taken or not taken by them.

With so many questions unanswered, with so many people unbelieving of the official explanation to this point, with the loss of moral authority in our institutions and leaders (their believability and trustworthiness) since Vietnam and Watergate, it is in the national interest that James Earl Ray be brought to court and given a fair trial.

Too many unanswered questions surround the King assassination, and too much circumstantial evidence points to the government's involvement (especially the FBI) in his death.

How a person who had blown every other simple (by comparison) criminal task he had ever undertaken, could originate, organize and orchestrate the assassination of the Rev. King, escape a heavily police guarded central city area during rush hour, secure visas which allowed him to travel to Canada and England — ALL BY HIMSELF — tests one's intelligence and common sense.

IT WAS PUBLICLY documented that J. Edgar Hoover had an intense hatred of blacks generally and a personal vendetta against the Rev. King in particular — calling him a liar, among other things. FBI memos indicating that the FBI was to "pre-

vent the rise of a black messiah" and that they were to "disrupt, discredit or otherwise destroy the black movement in America" are just some indication of the depth of Hoover's hatred. Tapes and letters sent by the FBI to the Rev. and Mrs. King and others were designed to harass and undermine his character and credibility. Another recent memo showing an amateurish attempt by the FBI to "create a leader to replace the Rev. King" is indicative of their mentality at the time.

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Universal Press Syndicate



James Earl Ray

buy a rifle and directed a report to Memphis on April 4, 1968, will be helpful in establishing the fact that there was a conspiracy to murder the Rev. King.

Since Memphis is a lot closer than Moscow, I ask you to meet with President Carter and ask him to request that I be given a trial. At that trial I am sure I will be able to prove that I am innocent and the secret FBI files which we will see at that trial will lead to the real murderers. I have said for 10 years that I'm sure that the FBI files hold the answers to the questions about the assassination of the Rev. King.

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

A-15

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/14/78
Edition: Final

Title:

Character:
or

Classification:
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388-522

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

AUG 15 1978

FBI - MILWAUKEE

1-MI-80-383
1-MI-88-7126
1-MI-44-388

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

King Felt Threatened, Friend Says

Washington, D.C. —AP— Martin Luther King Jr.'s chief lieutenant in the civil rights movement said Monday that he believed King received advance warning of his assassination.

"I think he had received some word from some sources that he was going to be assassinated," the Rev. Ralph David Abernathy told the House Assassinations Committee as the panel opened a week of public hearings on its investigation of King's death.

Under questioning, Abernathy said he had "no knowledge" of any warning delivered to King.

He said that although he and King were the closest of friends, King had said nothing to him about any threats.

Nevertheless, Abernathy recalled that the night before the murder in Memphis, Tenn., April 4, 1968, King delivered a speech in which he seemed to foretell his death.

That was a famous speech in which King declared, "I have been to the mountaintop and I have seen the promised land."

In more than an hour of testimony, Abernathy described his relationship with King from the time they first met in Atlanta in 1951.

Throughout his experiences in Memphis and elsewhere, King distrusted law enforcement agencies and felt he could not rely on them for protection, Abernathy said.

"He really did not rely on or trust the police powers in this country," Abernathy said. "He knew the FBI was against him and could not be trusted. He knew the CIA was against him and could not be trusted. His hotel rooms had been bugged. The police were looked on as an enemy."

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

A-1

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/14/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

44-388

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

44-388-523

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 15 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)



James Earl Ray, convicted killer of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., testified Wednesday before the House Assassinations Committee in Washington. Ray swore he did not kill the civil rights leader and said he was not at the murder scene. He described himself as a victim of conspiring lawyers, "intelligence agencies (and) publishing empires," and added that King was the victim of a conspiracy between the FBI and the Memphis (Tenn.) police. King was slain in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

-AP

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

A-2

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/17/78
Edition: Final

Title:

Character:

or

44-388

Classification:

Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388524

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED

AUG 18 1978

FBI - MILWAUKEE

MI only

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Panel Tries to Trip Ray on Testimony

AP and UPI

Washington, D.C. — The House Assassinations Committee tried Thursday to shake one discrepancy after another in James Earl Ray's account of his travels with mystery man "Raoul", triggering a storm of protest from Ray's attorney that delayed the hearing time and again.

Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) picked up on a theme cut short Wednesday when Ray was excused early from his first day of testimony after complaining of weariness he said he suffered from mistreatment by prison officials.

Stokes assailed Ray's statement to the committee that his unfound and never fully identified accomplice Raoul had never handled the .30-06 rifle, that later proved to be the weapon used to kill the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968.

And Ray told the panel that if he had killed King, his fingerprints never would have been found on the murder weapon.

"Every Novice Knows"

"I would have wiped my fingerprints off the rifle if I knew it was going to be used in a serious crime," Ray said in his second day of testimony before the Assassinations Committee. He insisted that even as a petty criminal he was too smart to leave his prints behind.

It was suggested that he did not have time to wipe his prints off the rifle because he was in a hurry to flee the scene of the shooting.

"Usually you do that (re-

move the prints) beforehand — before the crime," Ray said. "There are several things you can use to prevent your fingerprints from getting on the rifle. Every novice knows enough to keep your fingerprints off a weapon if it's going to be used for a serious crime."

"I used flesh colored Band-Aids in the past," he said.

Ray's fingerprints were found on the rifle when it was recovered near the shooting scene. Ray contends that he had given it the day before to a man he knew only as Raoul.

Conflicting Stories

"When we think about the fact that Raoul's fingerprints don't exist on that rifle at all, doesn't that indicate that Raoul doesn't exist at all?" Ray was asked.

"It doesn't to me," Ray replied. He said Raoul probably used Band-Aids or some other method to keep his prints off the rifle.

Ray admitted earlier Thursday that he had given conflicting stories to House investigators, but said these "small errors" did not dispute his denial that he shot King.

Under intensive questioning by Stokes, Ray said he had told two stories about how Raoul inspected and approved the King murder weapon when it was purchased in Birmingham, Ala., several days before the killing.

Had a Problem

Ray told investigators in Tennessee that he returned the first rifle to a sporting

goods store and bought a second one that Raoul inspected. But in his initial testimony Wednesday, Ray said Raoul inspected the first rifle, but never approved the second one.

"Where I had the problem was that I thought I had purchased the second rifle the same day as the first," he said. "When I saw government documents that I bought the second rifle the next day, I realized I had made an error."

Ray testified earlier he drove from Birmingham to Memphis, gave Raoul the rifle the day before King was shot and after that never saw the gun again.

Much of the first hour of Ray's testimony was taken up by wrangling between his attorney, Mark Lane, and committee members over procedural questions. At one point Lane accused the committee of returning to the "McCarthy era," a reference to the communist witchhunt led by the late Sen. Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.

Chairman Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.), warning against continued interruptions, told Lane he could be ejected from the hearing room.

Ray's memory was attacked again and again. Why had Raoul never been found? Who could have seen them together? Why couldn't Ray furnish more descriptive information about Raoul, such as his real name?

Ray, struggling to convince the committee that he did not kill King, blames his poor memory and human foibles for discrepancies in his stories.

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

A-2

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/17/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388-525

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 18 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

MI only

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Ray Tells Congress: 'I Didn't Kill King'

Washington, D.C. —UPI— James Earl Ray, who confessed to killing the Rev. Martin Luther King a decade ago, testified under oath Wednesday that he was several blocks away when the civil rights leader was slain in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

"I did not shoot Martin Luther King Jr.," Ray told the House Assassinations Committee in his first public testimony on the murder. His denial was expected.

Ray began speaking about 8:30 a.m. CDT and finished reading his 38 page prepared statement about 90 minutes later. His testimony was nationally televised by Public Broadcasting Service (Channel 36 in Milwaukee).

Speaking rapidly, Ray presented what he termed "newly discovered" FBI documents which he said suggested that the King assassination was a conspiracy between the FBI and the Memphis police.

Much of what Ray told the committee has been reported in other interviews over the years.

He said he was unaware of the King slaying until he heard a radio report an hour after the shooting. By that time, said Ray, he was driving in Mississippi, just over the Tennessee border. The radio report said police were looking for a white Mustang — the kind of car Ray was driving at the time.

Ray said he was at a gas station several blocks from the murder site at the time King was slain.

But he acknowledged renting a room at a boarding house from which the fatal shot was believed to have been fired, and he said he had brought a rifle to Memphis.

Turn to Hearing, page 13, col. 2

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

A-1

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 8/16/78
Edition: FINAL

Title:

Character:
or

Classification: ~~157-914~~
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-526

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED *h* FILED *h*

AUG 17 1978

FBI-MILWAUKEE

FBI/DOJ

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Loner Ray Gets a Forum at Last

Washington, D.C. —AP— And now the United States Congress has offered its ear to a man with a dozen names, a loner and a bumbling drifter, a convicted drunk, thief, burglar, robber, forger, escape artist and killer.

James Earl Ray has yearned for this day, a chance to recant once again, this time in the marbled magnificence of Capitol Hill, his confession to the 1968 murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Lights, camera, conspiracy. The House Assassinations Committee, its own credibility in question for alleged leaks, unsupported allegations and internal bickering was on the air at last with Ray as its star witness.

Mystery Man

It promised to be a field day for the legions already



James Earl Ray

convinced that Ray did not act alone, or, as he now claims, that he acted not at all but rather was set up to take the rap by a mystery man named "Raoul."

Ray, 50, has spent most of his adult life behind bars. He is now serving a 99 year sentence for King's murder in Memphis and a 1 to 2 year sentence for his 54 hour escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison in Tennessee last year.

Months ago, Ray consented to a lie detector test set up by Playboy magazine. The magazine reported that Ray lied, according to the detector, when he said he did not kill King. Ray later denounced the test.

Ray, who is still pleading for a new trial despite the Supreme Court's refusal to give him one, said, "I think that all could be resolved fairly simply at some type of hearing or trial. Possibly the committee will be able to resolve it."

Would Be at Odds

If the committee strikes a new conclusion, it will be at odds with an investigation that involved 3,000 FBI agents and 30,000 interviews. Ray's fingerprints were found on the murder weapon, a .30-06 rifle, and he was tracked down in London, living under a false name, four months after the killing.

Ray later would claim he handled the weapon during the course of what he thought was a gun running scheme by the man named "Raoul." He says he was changing a tire when the shot that killed King was fired and that he fled because he was a fugitive.

During his imprisonment, Ray has waged a private war with prison officials, at times refusing to work, tossing unwanted food from his cell and declining to appear before a board that could grant him better privileges.

Even Monday, as he was taken from his Tennessee cell and turned over to federal authorities for the trip to Washington, he allegedly refused to be photographed — an episode, according to his lawyer, Mark Lane, that resulted in a hard blow to the head by federal authorities.

"Doesn't Mingle"

In recent years, Ray has spent much of his time writing legal briefs and writs. He "talks to himself and doesn't mingle," said Charles Bass, assistant corrections commissioner at the Tennessee prison. "He's a very difficult person to get a line on."

Ray, 5 feet 10 inches and 170 pounds, has always seemed a loner. He speaks softly, acting by turns shy and sure in prison interviews. His once black hair is graying now, accenting blue eyes.

The eldest of nine children and the son of an alcoholic father, Ray gave up school in the 10th grade, drifted and joined the Army. He was stationed in Germany, where he was sentenced to hard labor for drunkenness and eventually discharged for "incompetence."

He adapted even more poorly to civilian life. Various

accounts of his criminal activities, apparently beginning with a typewriter theft in Los Angeles shortly after his discharge, portray him as a bumbling and nabbed for petty burglary and other crimes over the next 10 years.

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

A-13

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 8/16/78
Edition: LATEST

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: ~~157-514~~
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-527

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 17 1978	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	
FBI/DOJ	

that was the same type as that used to kill King.

Ray said he last saw the rifle the day before the assassination. He said he gave it to "Raoul" — a mysterious figure with whom Ray said he had engaged in smuggling activities in Mexico and Canada during the year before the King killing. Ray has claimed he was set up by Raoul.

On the day before the shooting, Ray testified that he met Raoul at a bar near the Memphis rooming House.

"He then took the rifle and departed, and that was the last I saw of the weapon," Ray said.

Ray said that on the day of the shooting he went to a gas station to check a leaking tire on the Mustang. He then drove back toward the rooming house to find a police car blocking the street and people running about.

Headed for New Orleans

Apparently because he was a fugitive from prison, he immediately started driving toward New Orleans, Ray testified. "I heard over the car radio that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had been shot in Memphis," he said.

Ray revealed for the first time how he financed his year out of jail — including a \$1,700 robbery in Canada, and a smuggling operation between Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, which brought in \$1,500, a Mexican smuggling scheme, carried out with Raoul, that paid \$2,000.

Ray originally pleaded guilty to the murder in 1968, but he almost immediately repented that confession after receiving a 99 year sentence.

Deal Alleged

He said Wednesday that his first lawyer, Percy Foreman, had made a deal with Tennessee authorities that resulted in his pleading guilty without facing a trial.

He said Foreman, a widely known defense attorney, had convinced him to plead guilty because the press had already convicted him and had told him it would "somehow be in my financial interest to plead guilty."

He also said the judge in the case was convinced that "blacks would burn down the town (Memphis)" if there were a trial.

Ray's testimony took place in the Rayburn House Office Building before 12 committee members, 90 staff members, 200 carefully screened, specially ticketed members of the public, and the news media.

Escorted by his lawyer, Mark Lane, Ray, 56, entered the hearing room under heavy security provided by federal marshals. He wore a checkered sportcoat and a striped tie and carried a briefcase.

Rep. Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.), who is presiding at the hearings, directed those in the room to remain seated whenever Ray stood and said anyone who did not stay seated and stationary throughout Ray's appearance would be ejected.

Prior to Ray's testimony, Lane said his client had been badly beaten by federal marshals Monday when he was transferred from a Tennessee prison. But Preyer said that matter was not before the committee.

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Ray's Guilt Denials Hardly Persuasive

James Earl Ray's rambling plea of innocence this week to the shooting of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968, seems to strengthen the conclusion that Ray was telling the truth when he pleaded guilty in 1969 to murdering the civil rights activist.

Ray's disjointed and vague story about a mysterious man named "Raoul," whom he had met in a bar and to whom he allegedly gave the rifle which was the murder weapon, conflicts with the hard facts of the case. Ray did purchase the murder weapon, he did rent a room overlooking the Memphis motel balcony where King was shot and the rifle was subsequently found in his belongings.

Ray, in testimony this week before the House Assassinations Committee, again said his attorney talked him into a false plea of guilty. But Ray's efforts to recant over the years have sounded more like a shot in the dark effort to capitalize on the public's fascination with the possibility that there was greater intrigue involved in the killing than had reached the surface.

The continuing controversy over whether Lee Harvey Oswald actually murdered John F. Kennedy had set the pattern.

It is also in fashion to suggest, as Ray has done, that the FBI is the real villain in the plot.

This is not to rule out conspiracy in the King killing. Ray was the type of petty crook who might have been used by others. Chances are that, if a conspiracy were involved, Ray was the hired gun who did merely what he was paid to do.

The tracks of any real conspirators in the case are extremely cold at this time and they probably could never be identified.

In any case, there is no evidence to absolve Ray of the responsibility for the actual shooting.

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

A-12

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/18/78
Edition: Final

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

44-388-528

1-WA-44-38861
1-MI-44-388
1-MI-88-7126

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FBI/DOJ

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King Panel Run by Quiet Chief

(c) New York Times Service

Washington, D.C. — It was a dramatic situation in the House's renewed investigation into the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

James Earl Ray, the convicted killer of King, was being brought into the tightly guarded hearing room on Capitol Hill as the star witness and would remain for hours to testify.

Yet the man in charge of the investigation, G. Robert Blakey, a 42 year old Cornell University law professor who is chief counsel for the Assassinations Committee, was typically quiet and out of the limelight.

He allowed an assistant to make the introductory remarks leading up to Ray's

appearance. And while Ray testified and was later questioned by the committee chairman, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), Blakey sat sphinx like.

Reshaping Probe

But for the last year, he has been the key role in reshaping and rehabilitating an investigation that lapsed into virtual chaos with noisy conflicts between his predecessor, Richard A. Sprague, and the previous committee chairman, Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.).

Far from being aloof from the main business of the investigation, Blakey has intense convictions on the subject. One of those convictions is that the investigation should not degenerate into a circus because, as he says, "It can easily be sensationalized."

A native of Bowlington, N.C., Blakey still retains a soft southern accent.

"He's an absolutely opposite personality to Dick Sprague, who was a flamboyant showman," a member of the committee says. "He's totally a man from academe."

Washington Experience

Blakey got his liberal arts and law degrees with high honors at Notre Dame and taught law there for several years. Since 1973 he has been teaching law at Cornell, where he heads the Cornell Institute on Organized Crime.

His Washington experience includes a stint as a young lawyer in the racketeering section of the Justice Department when Kennedy was

president and Robert F. Kennedy was attorney general and service as chief counsel for a Senate subcommittee on criminal laws and procedures from 1969 to 1973.

He also has been a frequent consultant on such matters as electronic surveillance, legalized gambling and crime conspiracies. He drafted the federal law on wiretapping.

Tough to Know Him

"It's very tough to get close to Blakey," one committee member said. "He is not looking for something spectacular. But he wants to have positive results and he's both meticulous and notoriously fair."

"He wants a conclusion that will say — in the King case, for instance — that Ray did it, or someone else did it



G. Robert Blakey

or helped him, or we don't know but believe the following legislation is needed . . ."

Blakey gets \$47,500 a year and has the support of a 90 member staff.

His leave of absence from Cornell expires in December, at which time he confidently expects the investigation to be complete and the committee's report finished. He expects to be teaching at Cornell again when the spring session begins Jan. 20.

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C-13

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/18/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:
or

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

44-388-529

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

①-MI-44-388

1-MI-88-7126

MI only

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Ray Wins Documents From Panel

UPI and AP

Washington, D.C. — James Earl Ray's lawyer accused the chairman of the House Assassinations Committee Friday of deliberately distorting evidence to paint a false, headline grabbing picture of Ray talking the Rev. Martin Luther King.

Ray's attorney, Mark Lane, and Ray also accused the committee of refusing to provide Ray with notes he had

The assassination panel's chief counsel prefers to avoid the limelight; story on Page 13, Accent.

made in the past, including material given to author William Bradford Huie, and Ray threatened briefly to refuse further testimony if he could not see the documents.

Ray's threat prompted another delay in the hearings while committee members sought to see whether the documents, including copies of Ray's handwritten notes about his travels, could be produced.

The committee agreed to make documents containing 200,000 words of evidence available to Ray before the day was out.

In a bitter opening exchange, Lane said Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), the committee chairman, ignored the dates on a newspaper story and on a postal address change form to make it appear Ray left Los Angeles for Atlanta after seeing news reports that King was going east.

"This was a deliberate effort, I believe, to deceive the American people," Lane said as the committee began its third day of questioning Ray.

Stokes accused Ray Thursday of going to Atlanta after news reports appeared in Los Angeles saying King was going east. The committee introduced a newspaper clipping to support that point.

But Lane said the newspaper account was dated March 16, 1968 — the day after Ray filed a postal address change for giving Atlanta as a forwarding address — rather than before Ray's decision to go to Atlanta, as Stokes had

suggested. Stokes refused comment on the accusation, but the committee acknowledged the conflicting dates for the official record.

It wasn't Ray's day Thursday as the Assassinations Committee moved to the end of its first week of public hearings on findings that have consumed two years of investigations costing more than \$4 million in public funds.

If Ray has a friend on the committee, he hasn't spoken up.

From the start, the committee's handling of Ray has been hostile. No member will say so, but the committee's purpose appears intended to make a persuasive case for the American people that he alone was the culprit.

That is strange in light of the committee's history.

It was created because many members of the House felt the full truth was not known and the two most in-

vestigated murders in history — King's and John F. Kennedy — deserved re-investigation.

Black congressmen particularly wanted an investigation. The Kennedy murder had been examined by the Warren Commission but there was no comparable public body to examine the King investigation and to see whether the FBI had performed adequately.

But it appears the congressmen on the committee in the course of the year came to accept the FBI version of events in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

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A-2

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Date: 8/18/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:
or

Classification: Milwaukee
Submitting Office:

44-388-530

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

① MI-44-388

1-MI-88-7126

MI only

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Claim Ray Told of Killing King

From Sentinel Wire Services

Washington, D.C. — James Earl Ray told a Scotland Yard inspector before his return to the United States in 1963 that he killed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and expected it would make him "a national hero," according to surprise evidence unveiled Friday.

The allegation drew an immediate denial from Ray and an angry denunciation from his attorney, Mark

Lane, who countered by announcing dramatically he has evidence Ray's accuser was "dismissed in disgrace" from the British police force on charges of perjury, robbery and other crimes.

In a heated exchange, acting committee Chairman Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.) did not contradict Lane's charge but merely said the panel was not attesting to the truth or falsity of the policeman's statement.

The panel then dismissed Ray as a witness until November — sticking to its planned three day schedule for his introductory testimony and postponing until late autumn further questioning on the police guard's allegations.

The damaging claim of Ray's alleged confession was attributed to retired British police officer Alexander Anthony Eist and was read aloud by Rep. Samuel Devine (R-Ohio).

Devine quoted Eist as saying he was Ray's nearly constant guard during the weeks of his imprisonment in London, and thus became something of a friend of the fugitive.

Eist, now a pubkeeper, was asked by the committee investigators on Aug. 4 whether he recalled Ray actually admitting the killing of King, or, instead, merely

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A-1
MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 8/19/78
Edition: Final

Title:

Character:
or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-531

1-HQ-44-38861
①-MI-44-388

JP
FBI/DOJ

Continued From Page 1

acknowledged a connection with the murder weapon.

"Oh, no, no, no," Eist replied. "During the course of the conversation, he definitely, he didn't actually come out with it, but it was there in the conversation that he'd done it."

At another point, Eist said: "He was telling me that after the shooting (on April 4, 1968), when he left this place, he panicked and threw the gun away . . . I mean there isn't any doubt from the conversation that he told me that he was admitting to me that he had done the murder."

Asked if Ray expressed a hatred of blacks — something Ray has long denied — Eist said, "There wasn't any doubt at all. He just hated black people. In fact, he said: he was trying to go to Africa to try to shoot some more," when he was arrested at London's airport on June 5, 1968.

"He was telling me," Eist went on in the interview, "that for him to have shot a black man of note in certain parts of America would make him into a national hero anyway. He seemed absolutely mad about publicity. He really wanted it."

Eist said Ray predicted he would make \$250,000 to \$500,000 for the killing because "he would have no shortage of friends, no shortage of fund raisers. He would

get them to go on TV and . . . he could write books."

Eist also said Ray complained his only mistake was to leave behind the murder weapon with his fingerprints on it but expressed confidence that would not be enough to get him on a murder charge.

"The only thing that the state or wherever this shooting occurred would be able to pin on him was a conspiracy because they couldn't actually prove that he fired the gun because according to him nobody saw him," Eist's statement said.

After the entire interview was read into the committee's record, Ray was asked to respond. He said simply: "That is probably the most

damaging statement made against me . . . It is false."

Ray then charged that the interview of Eist was evidence that the panel "intends to crucify me."

Lane, his attorney, returned to Ray's side about that time and said he had just placed a call to a barrister in England who denounced Eist as corrupt and called him "a disgrace to the England police force." Lane said his British contact told him Eist had been forced off the job for unlawful conduct.

PAGE TWO
44-388



Alexander Anthony Elst

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Ex-Policeman Implicates Ray

Los Angeles Times, AP

Washington, D.C. — In a bizarre series of events, the House Assassinations Committee presented sworn testimony Friday by a former British policeman that James Earl Ray had bragged about killing the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

The policeman, Alexander Anthony Eist, who guarded Ray in June, 1968, did not testify in person. Instead, Rep. Samuel L. Devine (R-Ohio) read aloud the 21 page transcript of an interview that Eist gave under oath to committee staff members two weeks ago.

In another curious twist, Coy Dean Cowden, a former mental patient who once claimed that he could give Ray an airtight alibi by proving Ray was several blocks away from the murder scene at the time King was shot, admitted to the committee that he had fabricated the whole story. Cowden testified that he was more than 400 miles from Memphis

at the time he said that he saw Ray in a service station at the moment of the killing.

Eist, in the interview tape recorded Aug. 4 at the Greenman's Pub that he owns near Cambridge, said Ray expressed a hatred of blacks and that, "For him to have shot a black man of note in certain parts of America would make him into a national hero."

Eist, who said he was assigned to guard Ray day and night after Ray's arrest at the London airport June 8, said Ray admitted killing King during the course of long, rambling conversations. He said Ray "was quite proud" of the crime.

Ray, who pleaded guilty to the April 4, 1968, murder of the civil rights leader, said Eist's assertion was "probably the most damaging statement that has been

Turn to Slaving, page 2, col. 4

made against me." But Ray insisted, "It is false."

Mark Lane, the assassination theorist who is acting as Ray's attorney, ducked out of the committee room while Devine was reading the Eist statement. When he returned, Lane said he had been informed by telephone by a London lawyer whom he did not name that Eist was fired from Scotland Yard "in disgrace."

"He has been placed on trial for taking bribes and for involvement in jewel robberies," Lane said. "On numerous occasions when he testified in court, he fabricated testimony."

Committee members did not dispute Lane's version of the events. One member conceded, during a break in the proceedings that the panel staff was "aware of allegations against Eist."

Eist retired from Scotland Yard in 1976 with the rank of detective chief inspector, a Yard spokesman in London said Friday.

He was charged in July, 1976, with two counts

conspiracy in connection with jewel robberies and with conspiracy to "pervert the course of justice," the spokesman said, but was found not guilty of both charges when tried earlier this year.

Shortly after the Eist statement was presented, the committee postponed further testimony by Ray until November.

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A-1

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 8/19/78
Edition: LATEST

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-532

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 20 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

1-MI-44-388

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Discredited Ray Back in Prison

UPI, Washington Star

Washington, D.C. — James Earl Ray was back behind bars Saturday and, barring a miracle when his congressional "trial" resumes in November, appears destined to serve his full 99 year sentence for killing the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Two surprise developments Friday in Ray's testimony before the House Assassinations Committee dealt severe blows to Ray's claim of innocence — a retired British policeman's statement that Ray boasted of killing King shortly after his arrest in London in 1968, and another witness' admission that his support of Ray's alibi was fabricated.

Ray's attorney, Mark Lane, said the officer had been charged with corruption and fired in disgrace. Scotland Yard later said

the officer, Alexander Anthony Eist, was found innocent of corruption in a trial earlier this year.

In the other development, a witness who Ray claimed could corroborate his alibi testified that he "totally fabricated" the story that he saw Ray in a Memphis gas station at the time King was assassinated in Memphis.

Coy Dean Cowden, 43, told the committee he was living over 400 miles away in Beaumont, Tex., and that he made up the alibi story to help a friend he met in the psychiatric ward of a Memphis veterans hospital "make a million" peddling it to newspapers, authors and the movies.

When Ray reappears before the committee in November, questioning is expected to focus on whether he was part of a conspiracy rather than a lone killer.

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
Milwaukee, Wisc.Date: 8/20/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: Milwaukee

44-388-533

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED①-MI-44-388
1-MI- 88-7126
MI only

FBI-MILWAUKEE

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If Ray Is Guilty, He Had Help in Killing King

By JESSE L. JACKSON

PETROS, Tenn. — After a three-hour meeting with James Earl Ray, I have reasonable doubt as to whether Ray killed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and I am absolutely convinced that if he did, he did not act alone.

On July 21, Ray wrote to me indicating: (1) He did not kill King; (2) There was a conspiracy involved; (3) He felt the answers would be found in FBI files. Without judging the truth of these statements, they did seem substantial enough to pursue and too important to ignore.

So on Aug. 10, I, along with Dr. Alvin Toussaint,

associate professor of psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School, and Rev. James Lawson, who was leading the garbage workers' strike and invited King to Memphis, met with James Earl Ray and his attorney, Mark Lane.

WHY DO I have such doubt?

1. The government has spent considerable time painting Ray as emotionally unstable and a racist, with a compulsion to kill King, as evidenced by his ranting and raving when he would see King on television. It has since been discovered that there were no televisions in the area he was confined to in the Missouri Penitentiary.

Dr. Toussaint's assessment was that Ray appeared to be a sane, rational and sober person. My assessment is that Ray is no more or no less racist than most white Americans and that he is virtually apolitical.

2. Grace Walden, the eye-witness who saw the man who ran out of the room where the shot was fired, refused to identify Ray. She was put in a mental institution for 10 years. The first two hours of news reports indicated that the killer was a short, stocky man in his late 50s, wearing a hunting jacket.

Also during the interview Ray mentioned a name that

to my knowledge, has never surfaced before. He claims that a William Barry, a policeman with the tactical squad of the Memphis police, was in the firehouse when the shot was fired.

RAY CLAIMS that Barry told him that he was in a position to have seen him come out of the flop house and escape in the white Mustang, if that is what had occurred.

3. Ray claims his guilty plea was entered under pressure from his attorney, Percy Foreman, who indicated that Ray's father (who had been a fugitive from the law for 25

years) and his brother would be picked up and incarcerated unless he pleaded guilty. Also, he argued, it was the only way he could save Ray's life. Though he confessed to the killing, when asked point-blank by the judge if he had acted alone he said, "I didn't say that."

4. Ray's motive was low. He was a narcotics hustler and gunrunner who committed crimes for pay. He had no record of violent crime.

5. The FBI's motive was high. A Senate committee documented that the FBI had King under electronic or physical surveillance 24 hours a day, with no fewer than seven agents, and sometimes as many as 25, from the time he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 until approximately one hour before the assassination, when they were pulled off.

6. Scientific examinations by the FBI have not proven that the bullet in King's body was fired from the rifle on the scene.

I AM NOT arguing that James Earl Ray did not kill King. I am NOT passing judgment on his guilt or innocence. But I am arguing that we should not be deceived into accepting a \$2 hustler as a tradeoff for a prophet of infinite worth.

Ray's motive may be to get out of jail. Our motive ought to be to find out the truth, and the only way I know of to make that happen is to get Ray in court.

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

A-19
MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 8/21/78
Edition: Final

Title:

Character:
or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-534

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FBI-MILWAUKEE	
8/21/78	

1-HQ-44-38861
1-MI-44-388

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Witness Angered by Character Attack

Mark Lane, attorney for James Earl Ray, said Saturday he was "quite upset" about the attack on his character and reliability as a witness before the House Assassinations Committee.

Mark Lane, attorney for James Earl Ray, made the charges against Eist at Friday's hearing before a national television audience and cited an unidentified British barrister as the source of his information about Eist. Lane said Eist was corrupt, that he

took part in jewel robberies throughout England and that he invented oral confessions.

Eist, who was assigned to guard Ray after he was captured in England in 1968, said Ray told him he had killed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

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

C-8
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 8/21/78
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

44-388-535

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
AUG 21 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

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general alleges similar FBI and political actions during the civil rights movement in Alabama.

Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Les Payne has revealed the strange actions by Memphis public safety director, Frank Holloman, in removing a black police officer in charge of security for King, Ed Redditt, just two hours before his assassination. Holloman spent 25 years working for the FBI (eight years as inspector-in-charge of J. Edgar Hoover's personal office) prior to his Memphis job.

King had been under constant electronic and physical surveillance from the time he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 until approximately one hour before his death by as many as 25 and never fewer than seven agents. According to Memphis newspaper sources, the FBI took over the investigation within one hour after the assassination and refused to talk to anyone.

3. The FBI is implicated because of actions not taken by them. Their investigation lacked thoroughness. I was standing in the parking lot below the balcony talking with King when the shot was fired, yet the FBI has never interviewed me. Interviewing eyewitnesses is normally a routine matter. Rev. Ralph Abernathy, who was also present, has said that he has never been interviewed ei-

ther. If the FBI overlooked routine investigative procedures, what else did it overlook?

ARTHUR MURTAGH, a former FBI agent and one who participated in the investigation, has indicated that his superiors — both in Atlanta and in Washington — washed out leads suggesting a right-wing connection and never even looked for a conspiracy.

When the memo surfaced from the St. Louis FBI bureau in regard to the Byers matter and the alleged \$50,000 offer by two St. Louis businessmen to kill King, Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell said that there may be other such memos yet undiscovered with past FBI positions stating conclusively that there was no conspiracy and the FBI played no role in King's death. How can one draw conclusions with certainty and yet say all the evidence may not be in?

If we knew as much about another organization (e.g. the Minutemen) as we know about the FBI in relation to King, it would be difficult, even irresistible, for reasonable people NOT to conclude that the FBI was involved. We know it engaged in character assassination. It is the task of the HSCA to establish whether the FBI went further and engaged in physical assassination. And it is in the national interest that we know the answer.

Universal Press Syndicate

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI Is 'Suspect' in King Killing

By JESSE L. JACKSON

THE HOUSE Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), through its public hearings, circumstantially convinced us that James Earl Ray was the actual assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Too many of us, however, are willing to settle for the "one crazy man" theory in King's death. Mounting evidence continues to point to a conspiracy, and circumstantial evidence suggests that the government itself, especially the FBI, is deeply implicated.

What suggests the FBI was involved? 1. The FBI had the greatest motive. Hoover's personal hatred of blacks, but especially King, is well-known and publicly documented. Others in authority at the FBI and many in the ranks share his views, took his lead and carried out his wishes with great zeal.

The background of James Earl Ray, a professional subculture criminal, tends to lead one to believe that he would do anything for money, rather than engaging in criminal activity for a cause — racial or ideological. Hoover, on the other hand, wrote memos directing the FBI to "disrupt, discredit or otherwise destroy the black movement" and "to neutralize black leadership and prevent the rise of a black messiah."

2. The FBI is implicated in



JESSE L. JACKSON

King's death because of actions taken by it. Hoover didn't just have certain feelings and attitudes or say things and write memos. He also acted on those feelings. His documented illegal activities are even greater than the contempt for the law displayed by former President Richard Nixon.

THE FBI USED the same and similar surveillance and disruptive techniques against King that it used against Soviet agents. The FBI spent more of the taxpayers' money violating the constitutional rights of King than it did any other American citizen in the history of this country.

Wiretaps were placed in his home and offices and in the homes and offices of associates and friends, as well as in hotel and motel rooms while he traveled. Attempts were made by the FBI to discredit him with churches,

politicians, unions and financial supporters. The FBI attempted to manipulate the press by leaking alleged damaging information about King, cultivated reporter writing negative articles about him and attempted to prevent positive articles about him (and others by him) from appearing.

When King received the Nobel Peace Prize, the FBI tried to both sabotage receptions given by foreign heads of state and undermine a huge banquet and special "day" held in his honor. It attempted to use Cardinal Spellman to prevent King from having an audience with the pope. The FBI sought to influence universities to withhold honorary degrees from King. It also attempted to use the Internal Revenue Service against him and his organization. They even sought to destroy King's marriage.

Even two years after King's death, Hoover and the FBI continued to attempt to smear and discredit his accomplishments, honors, character and integrity, and to undermine Mrs. King's efforts to perpetuate his legacy.

THE AMERICAN Civil Liberties Union revealed FBI and right-wing political collusion which resulted in violence against the "Freedom Riders" of the 1960s, and the present Alabama attorney

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

A-21

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WI.

Date: 9/11/78
Edition: LATEST

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MI

44-388-536
SEARCHED ☒ INDEXED ☒
SERIALIZED ☒ FILED ☒

SEP 13 1978

FBI-MILWAUKEE

FBI/DOJ

James E. Ray - 44-388
James Earl Ray - 44-388
88-7126
James "Earl" Ray - 157-1125-5pb
44-388
MI ONLY

Common Cause, a private watchdog group, said a study shows that the NEA, the largest teacher organization with 1,750,000 members, contributed \$620,556 to the 1974 and 1976 campaigns of 237 current members of the House.

Common Cause said a top legislative priority of the NEA, the Department of Education Organization Act, is expected to be considered soon on the House floor.

The bill would establish a cabinet level Department of Education that apparently would be more favorable to teachers' programs than is the current Health, Education and Welfare Department.

An NEA spokesman said there was "nothing at all" wrong with its contributions. "Our membership has supported candidates basically friendly to NEA, and money has been based upon the fact they supported NEA issues," he said.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Plot in King Slaying Hinted

From Sentinel Wire Services

Washington, D.C. — A member of the House Assassinations Committee said Sunday there is evidence that if confirmed would show there was a conspiracy to kill the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Rep. Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.), chairman of the panel's subcommittee on the John F. Kennedy assassination, made the statement on the CBS program "Face the Nation."

Preyer, a former judge, was asked whether it would be possible to prove a conspiracy existed without the cooperation of James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty to murdering the civil rights leader.

Preyer, noting the deaths of witnesses since the 1968 killing, replied: "It's going to be difficult to prove. It may be that we can only prove an association rather than a convictable conspiracy without Mr. Ray's help."

"I have to say, Judge Preyer," responded one questioner, "that your choice of words in that answer makes me think that you believe there was a conspiracy."

"Well," Preyer said, "I'll have to take refuge behind our committee's rules and say that I don't want to make a statement on that. I think it's fair to say this, there is evidence which, if it checks out

Washington Digest

to be credible, would show a conspiracy in that case."

On the Kennedy assassination, Preyer conceded that many questions will remain unanswered when the committee's work is through. Some will never be answered, he said.

Preyer maintained that the committee's investigation will at least put to rest the complaint that the assassination was never thoroughly explored.

In other Washington developments:

CORE: The executive director of the Congress of Racial Equality says critics who are trying to oust him are traitors and says he doesn't mind his foes comparing him to Ugandan dictator Idi Amin.

Roy Innis, who has directed CORE since 1968, said Amin "is a very dynamic leader."

Critics of Innis said he has turned the organization into a "black Mafia." James Farmer, founder and former director of CORE, is leading the movement to oust Innis, calling Innis an American Idi Amin.

Appearing on the syndicat-

ed television program, "America's Black Forum," Innis said he did not resent the reference.

"Idi Amin is a very dynamic leader," said Innis. "I may have many differences with him in policy and style of operation, but he has done some important things."

Innis said he is the first black man in the Western Hemisphere to be invited by Amin to be a delegate at a meeting of the Organization of African Unity.

Farmer, appearing on the same program a week ago, said he and his CORE supporters will hold a convention to vote out Innis. But Innis said a convention held in New Jersey gave him a vote of confidence.

NEA: The National Education Association "has blanketed the House of Representatives with campaign contributions," Common Cause Vice President Fred Wertheimer said.

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

A-4
MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WI.

Date: 9/25/78
Edition: FINAL

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MI

44-388-537

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
SEP 26 1978	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	
FBI/DOJ	

MILWAUKEE ONLY

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Claim Ray Plans Wedding



JAMES EARL RAY

Knoxville, Tenn. — UPI — James Earl Ray, serving a 99 year prison term for the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., will be married to a free lance artist within two weeks in a prison ceremony, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

Ray and Anna Sandhu, a 32 year old Knoxville courtroom artist, first saw each other during a June, 1977, hearing on escape charges against Ray, the Knoxville Journal said in a copyrighted story.

Miss Sandhu said she first spoke to Ray, 50, last fall while he was being interviewed by reporters.

"I'm marrying him because I love him and because I know he's not a murderer," Miss Sandhu said.

Stoney Lane, warden at the Brushy Mountain Penitentiary near Petros, said Tuesday that Ray had told him nothing about the story.

Lane added: "He'd be right back in his cell after it's over. There would be no honeymoon."



ANNA SANDHU

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 10/4/78

Edition: FINAL

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388

Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

MI ONLY

44-388-538

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 5 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

FBI/DOJ

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray, Artist Wed In Prison Rites

Petros, Tenn. — AP — A trembling James Earl Ray married a nervous Anna Sandhu on Friday behind prison walls where he is serving a 99 year sentence for murdering the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Ray, a bachelor, and his bride, a 31 year old divorcee and free lance courtroom artist, were married during a brief ceremony by the Rev. James Lawson. Lawson is a former King associate who invited the civil rights leader to Memphis where he was slain 10 years ago.

Reporters and photographers were barred from the 30 minute ceremony, which was attended by only a few friends and relatives. However, Lawson later played a tape of the proceedings at Brushy Mountain State Prison.

"This signifies that the best of your lives is yet to be, the past is behind you," Lawson told the couple. "The reason I am here is because I see it as a sign of grace."



ANNA SANDHU

Smiling nervously, the blonde bride, wearing an offwhite pleated skirt and matching crocheted blouse, told reporters after the ceremony that it was the happiest day of her life.

"I know we have a lot of adversity ahead of us," she said, occasionally wiping tears from her eyes. "But we're ready to face it."

The couple had a short reception with a cake baked by Ray's cellmate. They spent 10 minutes separated from their guests, but were watched closely by four guards. Tennessee law does not permit conjugal visits.

The new Mrs. Ray left for her Knoxville home after the wedding. Ray was returned to his cell.

Warden Stoney Lane said members of the party were searched to make sure they did not take cameras inside.



JAMES EARL RAY

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

A-3

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 10/14/78

Edition: FINAL

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388

Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-539
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

OCT 14 1978

FBI - MILWAUKEE

FBI/DOJ

MI ONLY

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Abernathy to Seek New Ray Trial

Petros, Tenn. —AP— The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, convinced that a conspiracy was behind the slaying of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., says he will work for a new trial for the man convicted as the civil rights leader's lone assassin.

Abernathy, who met and questioned convicted assassin



Ralph David Abernathy

James Earl Ray for five hours Tuesday, said he would form a national committee of clergymen and civil rights leaders to investigate King's death.

"I am thoroughly convinced that James Earl Ray did not do this alone, if he was involved with it at all," Abernathy said. "I really do not feel, after my discussion, that he knew he was cooperating in a conspiracy."

It was the first meeting between Abernathy, who succeeded King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Ray, who pleaded guilty to King's shooting death in 1969, but has since said the plea was coerced by officials, the FBI and his former attorney.

In August, the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson visited Ray and said afterward that he had reasonable doubt that Ray had killed King. He said he was convinced that if Ray did, he did not act alone.

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

A-10

MILWAKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 10/18/78
Edition: LATEST
Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-540

MI ONLY

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 19 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

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Abernathy Says Ray No Plotter

Petros, Tenn. — AP — The Rev. Ralph Abernathy visited James Earl Ray Tuesday and said that while he believed there was a conspiracy to murder Martin Luther King Jr., Ray had no conscious role in any assassination plot.

Abernathy, who succeeded King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, came to Brushy Mountain Penitentiary to meet with Ray for the first time.

"I am thoroughly convinced that James Earl Ray did not do this alone, if he was involved with it at all," Abernathy said. "I really do not feel, after my discussion today, that he knew he was cooperating in a conspiracy."

Abernathy said Ray's answers to about 200 questions he asked Tuesday "convince me more than ever that it was a conspiracy that took the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and that James Earl Ray should get a new trial."

Ray, now 50, pleaded guilty to killing King in 1968 in exchange for a 99 year prison sentence rather than the death penalty. He later recanted, saying he was coerced into making the plea by Memphis authorities, the FBI and his lawyer at the time, Percy Foreman.

Abernathy refused to specify what the questions or the answers were, but he said he believed new evidence that Ray's attorney, Mark Lane, is said to have uncovered would result in a new trial.

After Ray's marriage last Friday to a Knoxville artist, Lane said he had uncovered evidence in the past two weeks linking King's slaying to an organized group. Lane said high government officials had helped keep the information secret.

Lane refused again Tuesday to name the group but said he now knows the names of three individuals, two alive and one dead, who participated in the alleged plot.

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

A-15

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 10/18/78
Edition: FINAL
Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:

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Classification:

Submitting Office MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-541
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

OCT 19 1978

FBI - MILWAUKEE

FBI/DOJ

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John Ray, brother of James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Martin Luther King Jr., was arrested Tuesday in St. Louis, police said. Ray, 45, was booked for suspicion of burglary and assault with intent to kill. In another development, the House Assassinations Committee sought a court order to question John Ray about a possible family conspiracy to kill King in 1968.

—AP

MI ONLY

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

A-7

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 11/29/78

Edition: FINAL

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

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Classification: 44-388
Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE☐ Being Investigated

44-388-542 FBI/DOJ

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King Probe Thorough, Clark Says

AP and UPI

Washington, D.C. — Former Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark says a "quality of racism" in the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's attitude toward the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. did not stop the bureau from carrying out a vigorous and thorough investigation into King's assassination in April, 1968.

Clark testified Tuesday that he kept the Justice Department from taking an active role in the investigation of the assassination because he feared worsening relations with Hoover.

But he told the House Assassinations Committee that, even a decade after the King's assassination, nothing causes him to believe that a more



Ramsey Clark

thorough investigation would have resulted from the day to day participation of Justice Department attorneys.

"And it probably would have been worse in terms of already strained relations," he said, referring to his widely publicized differences with Hoover.

Responds to Criticism

Clark responded to criticisms in a 106 page committee staff report that the Justice Department did not use investigative tools at its disposal that might have uncovered a conspiracy to kill King — if one in fact existed.

The committee has indicated that it has uncovered new signs of a conspiracy in King's murder in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968.

This has centered on the possibility that one or both of the two brothers of James Earl Ray, who is serving a life sentence as King's sole assassin, might have been part of "a Ray family conspiracy."

Clark testified that he saw no evidence at the time of the original investigation that would indicate a conspiracy by the Ray brothers. He said he had seen no reason since then to change his mind.

John Larry Ray, one of the brothers, was arrested on assault and burglary charges Monday in St. Louis. Federal authorities were expected to bring him to Washington to testify.

The other brother, Jerry Ray, said in Marietta, Ga., Tuesday that there was no conspiracy to kill King.

Publicly Cordial

The committee was looking into suggestions that James Earl Ray might have murdered King to collect a reported \$50,000 reward.

Clark candidly discussed his differences with Hoover, saying that while the two were publicly cordial they were profoundly at odds over major policy issues.

Also, Clark said, "I think he understood my belief that whatever his past achievements, he had stayed on the job too long."

Committee Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) said this dispute might have been carried over into an "illegal and unconstitutional" FBI campaign to discredit King.

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

A-9

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

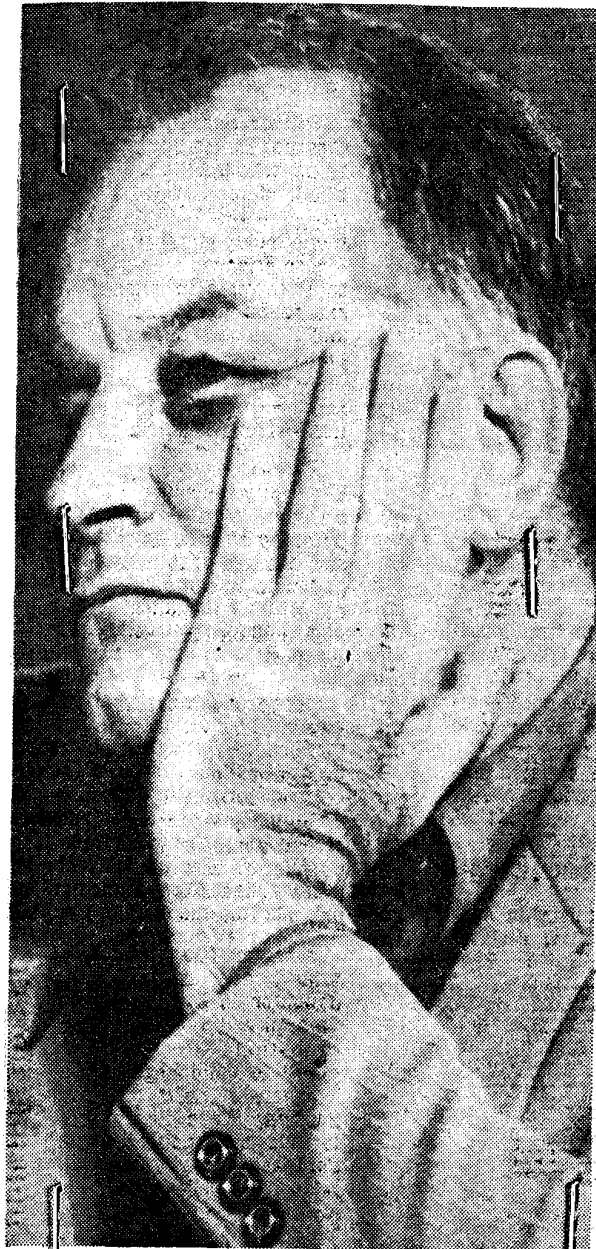
Date: 11/29/78
Edition: LATEST
Author:
Editor:
Title:

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

MI ONLY

44-388-543

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FBI/DOJ



—AP Photo

John Ray testified Friday in Washington

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Committee Ends King Probe Finds No Proof of Conspiracy

AP and UPI

Washington, D.C. — After a two year investigation, the House Assassinations Committee found strong suggestions of a conspiracy in the death of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., but no clear proof anyone other than James Earl Ray was involved.

The panel completed a month of public hearings on the assassination Friday and Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), committee chairman, said he believed the inquiry found "the outline of a conspiracy." But he said, "I'm not sure we proved conclusively that there was a conspiracy."

Final Report

The next step calls for committee members to reach detailed conclusions on the investigation in which the staff of 31 attorneys and investigators conducted 2,687 workdays making 572 trips to 874 locations in this country and abroad, conducting 2,686 interviews, issuing 260 subpoenas and granting immunity to 72 witnesses. Estimated cost so far: \$5 million.

A final report will cover the King assassination and the shooting of President John F. Kennedy, whose slaying was also investigated by the committee. The report is expected next year.

Committee counsel G. Robert Blakey has said it is likely that one or both of James Earl Ray's brothers, John and Jerry, played some part in planning or carrying out King's assassination on April 4, 1968, at a Memphis motel.

James Earl Ray is serving a 99 year prison term for the assassination. He pleaded guilty to the killing in 1969, but recanted in a confession shortly thereafter and now claims he was an unwitting participant in a conspiracy.

The committee spent time Friday asking John Ray about bank robberies in which he allegedly participated but never asked him directly if he had a role in the assassination.

Would Deny It

Ray's lawyer, James H. Lesar, said Ray would have

denied any involvement if asked.

At the time of the King killing, John Ray managed the Grapevine, a St. Louis bar that committee investigators say was frequented by two right-wing St. Louis businessmen, now deceased, who circulated an offer of \$50,000 for anyone who would kill the civil rights leader.

John Ray said he never heard any such discussions in the bar.

At one point, a committee attorney quoted excerpts from a letter John Ray was said to have written after William Bradford Huie, including this comment: "What's all the excitement about? He only killed a nigger. King should have been killed 10 years ago."

Asked whether he still felt that way, Ray replied, "I'd say no. . . I was living in a racial neighborhood. . . I got drunk. It's possible I made that statement."

Ray was in the custody of US marshals after his arrest Monday in St. Louis on trespassing and assault charges. Lesar claimed John "wandered into a house by mistake."

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

A-2

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 12/2/78
Edition: LATEST
Author:
Editor:
Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-388

Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

MI ONLY

74-388-544

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
DEC 1 1978	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

FBI/DOJ

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Panel Fails To Show Plot In King Death

Washington, D.C. — AP — The House Assassinations Committee completed its public inquiry into the death of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Friday without exposing a clear conspiracy in the assassination of the civil rights leader.

"The evidence tends to paint the outlines of a conspiracy," Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), the committee's chairman, said at the end of the final public hearing. But he added in an interview: "I'm not sure, given the passage of time, that we proved conclusively that there was a conspiracy."

King was killed in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968. James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to the assassination a year later but later recanted his confession and said he was framed.

While not reaching any final conclusions about its two year inquiry, the committee has said the evidence points to some involvement by Ray's brothers, Jerry and John. But they denied any involvement.

John Ray denied Friday playing any role in a bank robbery the committee believes financed the flight of James Earl Ray after the assassination.

The committee has said all three Ray brothers probably robbed a bank in Alton, Ill., of \$27,000 on July 13, 1967.

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

A-4

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 12/2/78

Edition: FINAL

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

44-388

Classification:

Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

☐ Being Investigated

44-388-545

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
DEC 4 1978	
FBI-MILWAUKEE	

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FBI/DOJ

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JFK-King Findings Due Jan. 3

Washington Post Service

Washington, D.C. — The House Assassinations Committee will announce its verdicts on the murders of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 3, the day its congressional mandate expires, Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) said Friday. The evidence will not be made public until later, however.

The awkward sequence was prompted by a startling last minute acoustical study for the committee, leaked by one of the committee members, that pointed to a conspiracy behind the Kennedy assassination.

The committee's experts said a Dallas police tape recording of the noises in Dealey Plaza when Kennedy was killed picked up a fourth shot, fired from the area of the so-called grassy knoll.

At a short meeting Friday, the committee decided to hold a public hearing on the new evidence next Friday.

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A-2

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: 12/23/78
Edition: LATEST

Title:

62-1178

Character: 44-388

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MILWAUKEE

MI ONLY

44-388-546

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
DEC 24 1978	
FBI - MILWAUKEE	

FBI/DOJ

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The Memory and the Dream

As America notes on Monday what would have been the 50th birthday of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., there may be a tendency to think of might-have-beens. The pull of that idea should be resisted.

True, there is the memory of the terrible April day when Evil and Hatred muttered, as had Joseph's brothers of old: "Behold this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him . . . and we shall see what shall become of his dreams."

However, to linger on that moment or on the promise thwarted by the assassin's bullet would be to give victory to the notion that to murder a man is to kill a dream. That idea, as Adlai Stevenson said, is a common heresy whose grave is to be found all over the world. Let us remember life, not death, and recall the ideals to which King's life was committed.

We will honor King's memory and his dream if we recall his unshakable conviction that peace — among nations and within nations — requires not just the absence of conflict but the presence of justice.

We will honor King's memory and his dream if we remember that there are millions of our people whose quest for what he termed "somebodiness" is barred by stubborn poverty and prejudice.

And we will honor King's memory and his dream when whites and blacks turn from the polarizations of race and find the common sense to affirm their common interests, their common citizenship and their common humanity.

Of course, it can be argued that these attitudes are visionary. And so they undeniably are. They were visionary when King proclaimed them with such force and eloquence. Then, they had a grip on the minds and hearts of a nation. Now, years of disillusionment and doubt have diminished their appeal.

But the dreams are merely diminished, not destroyed. They cannot be destroyed so long as those who were touched and moved by them renew their resolve to keep the faith and to gain the mountain-top.

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. 44-388T

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I-2
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

Date: 1/14/79
Edition: Latest

Title:

Character:
or

Classification: 44-
Submitting Office:

Milw.

44-388-547

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Carter Calls for King Holiday

New York Times, UPI, AP

Atlanta, Ga. — President Carter, promising that his administration would remain true to the goals of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., called on Congress Sunday to designate the slain civil rights leader's birthday a national holiday.

In a 35 minute speech from the pulpit of Ebenezer Baptist Church here, Carter told a largely black audience celebrating the 50th anniversary of King's birth:

"I hope that in this anniversary year I will be able to sign a bill proclaiming Jan. 15 as a national holiday in honor of Dr. King's principles and accomplishments."

It was the first time he had called publicly for a full national holiday in honor of King. As governor of Georgia, Carter avoided the sensitive issue by characterizing it as a federal matter.

Political Edge

The question took on a political edge Friday when Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) appeared at an earlier event in the six day commemoration ceremonies and promised to do all he could to persuade Congress to declare the holiday this year.

King's relatives and followers had hoped that the grand scale of the observance here would embarrass the white dominated state Legislature into declaring King's birthday, Jan. 15, a state holiday.

But they received a crisis recently when they asked Thomas Murphy, speaker of the Georgia House, whether his colleagues could be persuaded to pass the legislation.

One black leader grinned with satisfaction Sunday at the president's proposal and described it as an "end run" around the Legislature.

Symbolically Important

The holiday is symbolically important to America's blacks, especially in the South, where Confederate heroes such as Jefferson Davis and Robert E. Lee are commemorated by state holidays. King's birthday is already an unofficial and school holiday in a dozen states and the District of Columbia.

[Wisconsin has a statute that makes King's birthday a special observance day in public schools. In Michigan, all state offices were closed Monday as the state observed its first Martin Luther King Day.]

Carter, accompanied by his wife, Rosalynn, and daughter, Amy, flew here from Washington to attend the King ceremonies and to receive the Martin Luther King

Jr. Nonviolent Peace Prize from the King Center for Social Change.

Carter said of King, "Had he not lived, had his voice not been heard, had he not prevailed, it would be an embarrassment for the United States today to mention the words 'human rights' in international councils."

Ironically, Carter, a Georgia politician while King was the state's most widely known black citizen, never met King, who was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tenn.

"I Know His Heart"

The Rev. Martin Luther King Sr., who was pastor of the Ebenezer church for 44 years, took the pulpit during the ceremonies and said of Carter:

"I'm honored and happy and privileged to be on the same stage with the greatest president in the world. ... I know him close up, I know his heart."

Coretta Scott King, the slain civil rights leader's

widow, praised Carter for continuing to struggle against the "trilogy of evils" her husband fought — "poverty, racism and war."

Carter promised during his speech at the church to fight for new funds for a host of social welfare programs and said he would unveil the details in the budget he will present next week.

Meanwhile outside, hundreds of chanting Iranian students marched across the street from the church, and the Atlanta chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded by King, also held a protest march against domestic budget cuts and military spending increases.

Earlier, in an interview with a group of black journalists, Carter said he would like to nominate blacks for judgeships throughout the nation but indicated he was facing difficulties getting senators from several Northern states to submit suggestions for women and minority judges.

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Milwaukee Journal
Milwaukee, Wis.

Date: 1-15-79
Edition: Latest

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Classification: 44-

Submitting Office: Mi

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FBI/DOJ

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Date: APRIL 21, 1982

Edition: LATEST

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI tormented King to the end

By LES PAYNE

FOURTEEN YEARS AGO this month, Martin Luther King Jr. walked out onto the balcony of his motel and extended his left hand toward the railing. He is reaching for that railing yet.

Much about the circumstances of King's assassination has been obscured, chiefly by the FBI, which had no small role in tormenting this man of peace in life, and in slandering his memory as he lay decomposing in the cold disturbed ground of Atlanta.

Any enlightened student of history knows that a state's police agencies torment leaders of the oppressed not for personal reasons, but because they dare challenge the oppressive system of the dominant society.

Still no real answer

For years, the FBI managed to hide the full extent of its pursuit of King because of its friends in the media and its ability to control government investigations of the matter. Despite bureau pressure, the 1978 US House Assassinations Committee concluded that King's death was likely the result of a conspiracy. James Earl Ray is serving a 99-year prison sentence as the lone assassin.

Scores of books have been written about the King case, but only recently has one brought to bear the weight of disinterested, intelligent inquiry and analysis. David J. Garrow's "The FBI and Martin Luther King Jr." is a book well-documented and tightly analytical. Garrow, who holds a Ph.D. from Duke and teaches history at the University of North Carolina, sets out to explain why the bureau pursued King so steadfastly until his assassination in 1968. He postulates that the seven-year investigation of King went through three distinct phases.

The first phase, Garrow submits, was initiated after an informant who had infiltrated the American Communist Party said that King's confidant, Stanley Levison, had been active in the party in the 1950s. In a well-researched chapter, Garrow details steps leading up to the bureau going full-throttle on the investigation.

The FBI knew the domestic Communist Party well enough to know that King had no direct connection

with it. In "Operation Solo," the bureau had managed to infiltrate two brothers, Morris and Jack Childs, into the upper reaches of the party. "Over the years Morris Childs traveled all over the world," Garrow writes. "In these travels he served as the concealed representative of American party leader Gus Hall. From Hall, Morris and Jack learned virtually everything occurring within the American Communist Party."

The operation never supported charges that King was under communist influence.

But instead of calling off the search for the communist conspiracy, the FBI, in January 1964, redirected and expanded its investigation of King, in Garrow's phase two. Here the FBI's intent, disclosed in its blizzard of memoranda, was to "discredit," "neutralize," or "expose" and finally to destroy King as an authentic black leader.

Saw way to discredit

Having discovered that King took pleasures outside his marriage, the bureau saw in his personal life a way to discredit him. William Sullivan, a puritanical New Englander who headed the FBI's domestic intelligence division, pursued this assignment fanatically while portraying himself to reporters and others as essentially an open-minded liberal.

Sullivan and Hoover harassed and attempted to intimidate King, his family and those around him. They photographed him in compromising positions, recorded intimate conversations, mailed scurrilous letters and tapes to his wife and even wrote King a blackmail letter suggesting that he commit suicide.

Phase three against King was strictly political, according to Garrow. In February 1967, King spoke out against US involvement in Vietnam. President Johnson and much of the media joined the FBI in attacking King on this one.

The Washington Post called King's criticism of the war effort "sheer inventions of unsupported fantasy." The Post sentenced King to "diminished usefulness to his cause, to his country and to his people."

The FBI's subterranean battle against King now went public.

As Garrow points out, the bureau's

social role has been to repress all perceived threats to the dominant status quo-oriented society. Thus the FBI is not "a deviant institution in American society, but actually a most representative and faithful one."

Near the end, on the Vietnam issue, the status quo-oriented society made King an enemy of the people. It would have been no great leap for someone to conclude that eliminating King would be a patriotic public service. The stage was set.

And on April 4, Martin Luther King walked out onto that balcony and reached for that railing.

Les Payne of Newsday writes commentary distributed by The Los Angeles Times.

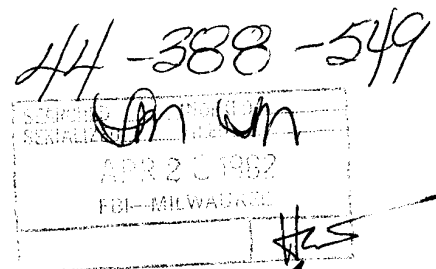
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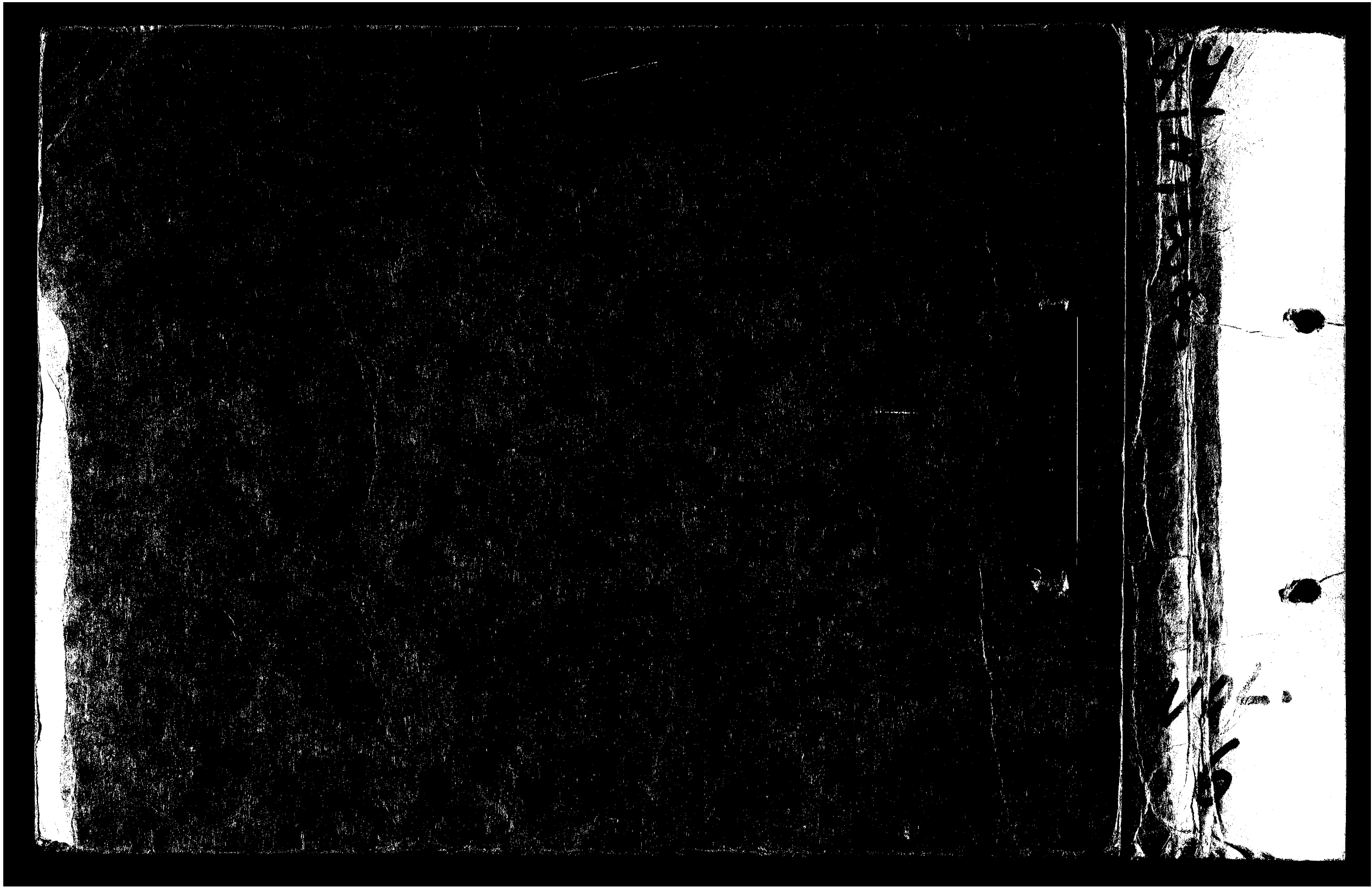
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