

PAGE TWO

CE 44-1365

CLEAR

IN BOOK HE IDENTIFIED ASSASSIN OF MARTIN LUTHER KING AND IMPLIED THIS ASSASSIN HAD FIRST SOUGHT TO HIRE MOORE FOR THE ASSASSINATION. MOORE CLAIMED TO HAVE REPORTED INFORMATION TO FBI AND THAT KELLEY HAD ASSIGNED MOORE A FILE NUMBER. MOORE INDICATES HE WAS IN CONTACT WITH OTHER PROSPECTIVE PUBLISHERS AND ALSO CLAIMS CORRESPONDENCE WITH U. S. SENATORS FRANK CHURCH AND EDWARD KENNEDY. HE FEELS LIFE IS IN DANGER.

GRACE STATES HE HAS SCHEDULED PROSPECTIVE RECONTACT WITH MOORE CONCERNING PUBLICATION ABOUT SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1977. GRACE PLANS TO DEPART DURHAM, N. C., NOON, JANUARY 28, 1977, TO DRIVE TO DIPLOMAT MOTEL, HOLLYWOOD BEACH, FLA., JANUARY 29, 1977, TO ATTEND MEDICAL MEETING. GRACE OFFERED TO FLY TO SAN JUAN SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1977, AND TAKE FBI UNDERCOVER AGENT AS ASSISTANT PUBLISHER TO MEET WITH MOORE OR OTHERWISE COOPERATE IN ANY WAY. OFFER OF HAVING FBI AGENT PARTICIPATE IN ANY INTERVIEW WITH MOORE DECLINED. GRACE ADVISED HE WOULD REPORT RESULTS OF ANY FUTURE CONTACTS WITH MOORE.

MIAMI AND SAN JUAN BEING ADVISED IN THE EVENT OF ANY FUTURE CONTACT.

PAGE THREE CE 44-1365 CLEAR

MEMPHIS REVIEW INDICES REGARDING OTIS MOORE AND ADVISE.

CHARLOTTE WILL PROMPTLY FURNISH ANY ADDITIONAL INFOROATION
RECEIVED FROM DR. GRACE.

BT

PW

0281949Z MM L

ME0005 0290300Z

PP HQ CE SJ MM

DE ME

P 280300Z JAN 77

FM MEMPHIS (44-1987 SUB M) (P)

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861) (PRIORITY)

CHARLOTTE (44-1365) (PRIORITY)

SAN JUAN (PRIORITY)

MIAMI (PRIORITY)

BT

CLEAR

✓ 1854
44-2851*(4/68)AL60:KX/157-2434*
MURKIN.

RE CHARLOTTE TELETYPE DATED JANUARY 28, 1977.

FOR INFORMATION OF BUREAU AND ALL OFFICES RECEIVING THIS COMMUNICATION, OTIS MOORE REFERRED TO IN REFERENCED TELETYPE APPEARS TO BE IDENTICAL WITH OTIS HUMPHREY MOORE/ IN CASE ENTITLED "OTIS HUMPHREY MOORE; SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY - VICTIM; POTENTIAL CONGRESSIONAL ASSASSINATION STATUTE MATTER." IN BUREAU TELETYPE TO MEMPHIS DATED MAY 17, 1976, IN THE MOORE - KENNEDY MATTER THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS SET FORTH REGARDING OTIS HUMPHREY MOORE:

b. [REDACTED]

JHM/mgh
1/28/77

File Stripped
Initials
Date 1-31-77
Stevens

44-1854-789

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 28 1977	
FBI-MIAMI	

PAGE TWO (ME 44-1987 SUB M)

ON MAY 14, 1976, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRET SERVICE FURNISHED THE FOLLOWING:

ON MAY 12, 1976, HE INTERVIEWED OTIS HUMPHREY, CALLE 9 NUMBER L-12, ROYALTOWN, BAYAMON, PUERTO RICO: DATE OF BIRTH [REDACTED] PALCE OF BIRTH, ELAINE, ARKANSAS; RACE - WHITE; SEX - MALE; COMPLEXION - RUDDY; HAIR - BROWN; EYES - GREEN; MEIGHT - 5'3"; WEIGHT - 146 POUNDS; SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER [REDACTED] MILITARY SERIAL NUMBER RA [REDACTED] SMALL SCAR ON BRIDGE OF NOSE. THE SECRET SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE ADVISED THAT MOORE SAID THAT IN 1965, WHILE DRINKING ^{Temple} IN A BAR IN TEM3, TEXAS, TWO UNKNOWN MALES ENGAGED HIM IN CONVERSATION TO THE EFFECT THAT MOORE WAS OFFERED \$50,000 TO ASSASSINATE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MOORE BELIEVES HE IS IN POSSESSION OF SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION, WHEN, COUPLED WITH THE INFORMATION IN POSSESSION OF JAMES EARL RAY AND SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY, WILL BE ABLE TO "PUT IT ALL TOGETHER" AND RESOLVE THE MATTER OF KING'S ASSASSINATION ONCE AND FOR ALL.

ACCORDING TO THE SECRET SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE, MOORE WAS SCHEDULED TO DEPART FROM ROOSEVELT ROADS NAVAL BASE IN PUERTO RICO ON MAY 15, 1976, DESTINED TO CHARLESTON, S.C.

PAGE THREE (ME 44-1987 SUB M) CLEAR

MOORE VOWED THEREAFTER TO MAKE HIS WAY TO WASHINGTON, D.C., BY WHATEVER MEANS AVAILABLE AND SIT IN THE OFFICE OF SENATOR KENNEDY AND PESTER THE OFFICE PERSONNEL UNTIL ABLE TO SEE SENATOR KENNEDY PERSONALLY. HE ALSO STATED HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO SEE OTHER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, MENTIONING BY NAME REPRESENTATIVE WILBUR MILLS. THE SECRET SERVICE AGENT NOTED THAT MOORE APPEARED TO BE MENTALLY UNSTABLE DURING THE INTERVIEW.

ON MAY 15, 1976, MOORE WAS INTERVIEWED BY THE FBI AT HIS RESIDENCE. HE REITERATED HIS INTENTION OF ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN AN INTERVIEW WITH SENATOR KENNEDY REGARDING THE ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING AND PRESIDENT KENNEDY. MOORE ADVISED THAT IF SENATOR KENNEDY WOULD NOT SEE HIM HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES EARL RAY, WHOM MOORE FELT DID NOT TELL THE TRUE STORY OF THE ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING. WHEN QUESTIONED REGARDING HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE ASSASSINATION OF KING, MOORE FURNISHED THE SAME INFORMATION HE HAD PREVIOUSLY FURNISHED THE SECRET SERVICE AGENT, ADDING ONLY THAT A "MULTI-MILLIONAIRE LAWYER FROM

PAGE FOUR (ME 44-1987 SUB M) CLEAR

DALLAS" WAS PRESENT WHEN HE WAS OFFERED \$50,000 TO ASSASSINATE KING. MOORE ADVISED HE HAD ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BUT WOULD ONLY GIVE IT TO SENATOR KENNEDY BECAUSE HE HAD CONTACTED THE FBI IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE OFFER HAD BEEN MADE AND NO ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MOORE'S WIFE, LYDIA M. MOORE, NEE TORRES, REVEALED THAT MOORE HAD BEEN PLANNING TO TAKE THIS TRIP FOR SOME TIME BUT THAT SHE HAD BEEN ABLE TO TALK HIM OUT OF IT. AT THE TIME SHE ADVISED THAT UNTIL RECENTLY HER HUSBAND HAD BEEN UNDER CARE OF A DR. GARCIA FOR A NERVOUS DISORDER AND WAS TO HAVE BEEN HOSPITALIZED FOR TREATMENT. SHE STATED THAT THE NIGHT IN 1965 HER HUSBAND CAME HOME WITH THE ASSASSINATION STORY HE WAS EXTREMELY DRUNK AND DID CALL THE FBI.

MOORE MADE AVAILABLE HIS DISCHARGE PAPERS WHICH REVEALED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: DATE OF BIRTH, [REDACTED] PLACE OF BIRTH, ELAINE, ARKANSAS; SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, [REDACTED] HOME OF RECORD, CARESIO - ANTION RIQG NUMBER 63, HUMACO, PUERTO RICO; OCCUPATION IN MILITARY, COOK AND MESS

PAGE FIVE (ME 44-1987 SUB M) CLEAR

STEWARD; LAST UNIT ASSIGNED, COMPANY - 75TH RANGER BN FIRST ARMORED DIVISION, FT. HOOD, TEXAS. UNIT RECORDS TRANSFERRED TO : USAR CON OP (RETIRED) RCPAC 9700 PAGE BOULEVARD, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI. WEAPON QUALIFICATION: M14 SHARPSHOOTER. OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENTS: 1965, WURTZBURG ,GERMANY; 1967-68, VIETNAM; 1970-71, THAILAND. REASON FOR DISCHARGE: RETIREMENT IN DECEMBER, 1974.

K MOORE ADVISED THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE IN VIOLENCE, THAT HE HAS NO WEAPONS AND DOES NOT HAVE ACCESS TO ANY WEAPONS. MOORE'S WIFE ADVISED HER HUSBAND IS NOT PRONE TO VIOLENCE AND SHE IS OF THE OPINION HE WOULD NOT RESORT TO VIOLENCE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSES.

IT WAS THE OPINION OF THE INTERVIEWING AGENTS THAT MOORE WAS IN AN EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE STATE OF MIND AND SEEMED TO BE DETERMINED TO ACCOMPLISH HIS MISSION. PHOTOGRAPHS OF MOORE AVAILABLE IF NEEDED.

A REVIEW OF MEMPHIS INDICES AND FILES REVEALED NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IDENTIFIABLE WITH MOORE.

NO FURTHER ACTION CONTEMPLATED BY THE MEMPHIS OFFICE.

BT

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Seal King Tapes, ²⁻¹ Court Orders FBI

WASHINGTON — A federal judge Monday ordered tapes of its bugs and wiretaps on Martin Luther King Jr. be sealed in the National Archives and removed only on court orders during the next 50 years.

U.S. District Judge John Lewis Smith gave the FBI 90 days to assemble all known copies of the tapes and transcripts of its surveillance of King and offices of his Southern Christian Leadership Conference between 1963 and 1968.

But Smith refused to award damages to the SCLC or Bernard Lee, former assistant to the slain civil rights leader, who had filed suit on grounds the surveillance was a civil rights violation.

Smith ruled a damage award was barred by a three-year statute of limitations, which he said began to run at the time Lee and the SCLC "actually discovered or ... should have discovered" facts about the surveillance.

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

20-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 2/1/77

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title:

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Character:

or 44-1854

Classification:

Submitting Office: MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-790

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 31 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

HQ0050 0352149

RR AN BH BT CI CV DE EP HO JK LV MM MI NF PX PG SL SA SF SI TP WF
DE HQ

R 042010Z FEB 77

FM DIRECTOR (62-117290)

TO ANCHORAGE ROUTINE

BIRMINGHAM ROUTINE

BUTTE ROUTINE

CINCINNATI ROUTINE

CLEVELAND ROUTINE

DETROIT ROUTINE

EL PASO ROUTINE

HOUSTON ROUTINE

JACKSONVILLE ROUTINE

LAS VEGAS ROUTINE

MIAMI ROUTINE

MILWAUKEE ROUTINE

NORFOLK ROUTINE

PHOENIX ROUTINE

PITTSBURGH ROUTINE

*cc in 62-6603 (House Select
Committee*

#9

44-1854-791

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>Y</i>	FILED <i>Y</i>
FEB 1977	
FBI-MIAMI	

[Signature]

PAGE TWO (62-117290) CLEAR

SAINT LOUIS ROUTINE

SAN ANTONIO ROUTINE

SAN FRANCISCO ROUTINE

SPRINGFIELD ROUTINE

TAMPA ROUTINE

WASHINGTON FIELD ROUTINE

BT

C L E A R

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS, BUDED

FEBRUARY 11, 1977

REFERENCE BUREAU TELETYPE TO ALL OFFICES DATED JANUARY 5,
1977.

REFERENCED TELETYPE INSTRUCTED THAT FBIHQ BE FURNISHED
AN INVENTORY OF CERTAIN FILES RELATING TO THE ASSASSINATION
OF JOHN F. KENNEDY WHICH IS BEING REVIEWED BY THE HOUSE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS (HCS-A). THIS TELETYPE
ALSO REQUESTED THAT FBIHQ BE ADVISED WHETHER OR NOT THESE
KENVEDY FILES OR MATERIAL RELATING TO THE MARTIN LUTHER

PAGE THREE (62-1100) CLEAR

KING, JR., ASSASSINATION (MURKIN) INVESTIGATION HAVE BEEN DESTROYED UNDER THE DESTRUCTION OF FILES AND RECORDS PROGRAM.

IN REPLY TO REFERENCED TELETYPE, THE ABOVE RECIPIENTS OMITTED INFORMATION REGARDING THE MURKIN INVESTIGATION AND NO INDICATION WAS RECEIVED AS TO WHETHER OR NOT MURKIN FILES IN YOUR OFFICE HAVE BEEN DESTROYED. THIS CERTIFICATION IS NECESSARY.

THEREFORE, RECIPIENTS ARE TO ADVISE FBIHQ WHETHER OR NOT ANY MATERIAL RELATIVE TO THE INVESTIGATION OF KING'S ASSASSINATION HAS BEEN DESTROYED. SUBMIT TELETYPE TO REACH FBIHQ BY FEBRUARY 11, 1977, ATTENTION GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION, CIVIL RIGHTS SECTION, CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY UNIT.

BT

FBI

751559

TRANSMIT VIA:

☒ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☐ Airtel

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☒ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ E F T O
☒ CLEAR

Date FEBRUARY 8, 1977

FM MIAMI (62-6603) RUC

TO DIRECTOR (62-117290) ROUTINE

BT

CLEAR

ATTENTION GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION, CIVIL RIGHTS
SECTION, CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY UNIT.

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS, BUDED: FEBRUARY 11,
1977.

RE BUREAU TELETYPE DATED FEBRUARY 4, 1977.

MURKIN FILE REVIEWED AND NO MATERIAL RELATIVE TO
THIS INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN DESTROYED UNDER DESTRUCTION OF
FILES AND RECORDS PROGRAM.

BT

② Miami

RLQ:mah

(1) *maaf*

① 44-1854)

Approved: *m/jz*

Transmitted

(Number)

(Time)

Per *y*

Searched

Serialized

Indexed

Filed

44-1854-792

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Committee Staff Refused Access To Files on JFK, King Slayings

From Herald Wire Services

WASHINGTON — A congressional investigation into the assassinations of President John Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. came close to collapsing Friday as a result of a dispute within the committee.

Four investigators from the House Select Committee on Assassinations staff were refused access to FBI files on orders from committee chairman Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D., Tex.), who announced Thursday that he was firing Richard Sprague, the committee's chief counsel and staff director.

However, Sprague refused to be fired. He showed up at his office Friday, worked a while, then left to keep an appointment in Philadelphia.

The 11 other members of Gonzalez's committee backed Sprague, claiming that Gonzalez lacked authority to fire him.

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

8-C

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 2-12-77

Edition:

Author:

Editor: JOHN F. KENNEDY

Title: MARTIN LUTHER KING

Character: 105-8342*
or 44-1854*

Classification:

Submitting Office MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-793

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 15 1977	
FBI-MIAMI	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

King Assassination Probe Clears FBI

New York News Service

WASHINGTON — A Justice Department task force says that the "sum of all the evidence" points to James Earl Ray as the sole killer of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but concedes that it was unable to find out where Ray got the money to escape abroad after the April 4, 1968, slaying.

The task force report also concludes that the FBI was not implicated in the King slaying and that its investigation of the assassination was thorough and honest.

The report, made public Friday, immediately came under fire from King's widow, Mrs. Coretta King, and the civil rights leader's associates.

"WE DON'T have any faith in that report because it seems the FBI and the Justice Department, to a degree, were involved in the assassination or the events surrounding it," said Tyrone Brooks, spokesman for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Mrs. King told reporters in Atlanta that she would "like for some agency to disclose ... whether the Justice Department made a sufficient inquiry and could find their conclusions convincing."

The task force was set up by former Attorney General Edward H. Levi to clear up questions about the FBI harassment of King and the investigation of his death.

"The sum of all the evidence of Ray's guilt points to him so exclusively that it most effectively makes the point that no one else was involved," the report said, commenting on the task force review of more than 200,000 FBI documents and its interview of some 40 witnesses.

"Of course," the report added, "someone could conceivably have provided him (Ray) with logistics or even paid him to commit the

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

10-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 2-19-77

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title: MARTIN LUTHER KING

Character:

or 44-1854*

Classification:

Submitting Office MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-794

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 28 1976	
FBI - MIAMI	

#9

~~crime~~ However, we have found no competent evidence upon which to base such a theory.

AS FOR THE FBI investigation, the task force said the bureau failed to check some leads that might have erased some lingering mysteries about the case. Among these was the possibility that one or both of Ray's brothers might have helped him escape from the Missouri State Prison in 1967.

Later Friday, FBI Director Clarence Kelley issued a statement expressing "great satisfaction" that the task force had found the FBI investigation thorough and concluded the bureau was not involved in King's death.

He noted that task force criticized the harassment of King and said, "guidelines, procedures and our determination to be completely observant of civil rights and the dignity of man will prevent a recurrence of these activities."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Inquiry concludes Ray acted alone

WASHINGTON — A major Justice Department inquiry has concluded that the Federal Bureau of Investigation probe of the murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King was "thoroughly, honestly, and successfully" conducted, and that the best available evidence suggests that the convicted murderer, James Earl Ray, acted alone.

The Justice Department investigators, who made an eight-month review of the FBI's handling of the case, also concluded that the bureau may have had grounds for starting a security investigation of King, but that its six-year surveillance was clearly unwarranted.

The report released yesterday said that the FBI never developed evidence that King had any affiliation with the Communist Party, and that it was the personal feuding between him and the late FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover — not legitimate national security concerns — that resulted in the bureau's "determination to discredit Dr. King."

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

4-A

MIAMI NEWS

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 2-19-77

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title: MARTIN LUTHER KING

Character:

or 44-1854*

Classification:

Submitting Office MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-795

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 23 1976	
FBI - MIAMI	

#9

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray, Brother May Testify About King Assassination

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The embattled House Assassinations Committee has a letter, purportedly from James Earl Ray, indicating that he is willing to discuss testifying about the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Walter Fauntroy, chairman of the subcommittee investigating the King assassination, confirmed that Ray and his brother are among witnesses he wants to call.

But Fauntroy, Washington, D.C. delegate, indicated that the brothers are not the source of new information that he said the committee has on King's assassination. He refuses to say what that information is.

THE CHAIRMAN said he would like to hold public hearings this month, but is not sure the subcommittee can move that fast.

The committee has a letter carrying Ray's name and signature rejecting the insistence of his lawyer, James H. Lesar, that he not testify before the committee.

"This is not necessarily my position," the letter says. "Therefore, if the committee has any queries I would appreciate it if they would in the future direct them to Attorney Jack Kershaw."

Kershaw, a Nashville, Tenn., lawyer, could not immediately be reached.

A committee spokesman confirmed that "we are in receipt of such a letter and from what we know of his (Ray's) signature that is a legitimate letter."

Ray's brother, Jerry, said he told a committee investigator that both he and Ray are willing to testify on

Ray's contention that he did not kill King.

"I'M ANXIOUS to corroborate or repudiate the information we have through his (Ray's) testimony," Fauntroy said. "Having him before us under oath would be quite valuable."

Asked if the hope of calling Ray means the investigation will deal with his contention that he was railroaded into falsely pleading guilty, Fauntroy said, "Obviously that is the purpose of Mr. Ray."

"He indicated at his hearing in pleading guilty that there was a conspiracy and that is the basis of this appeal, Fauntroy said.

House Speaker Thomas O'Neill said after a meeting with committee Democrats Thursday that they have new information on the King assassination that they hope will persuade the House to keep the investigation alive.

THE COMMITTEE dies at the end of this month unless the House extends it and Fauntroy wants early public hearings largely for that reason.



James Earl Ray
... panel has his letter

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

20-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 3-5-77

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title: MARTIN LUTHER"
KING

Character:

or 44-1854*

Classification:

Submitting Office: MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-796

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 8 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

#9

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK-King Probe Gets New Chairman

From Herald Wire Services

WASHINGTON — The House Select Committee on Assassinations got a new chairman Tuesday after the resignation of Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D., Tex.) was finally accepted on the House floor by a vote of 296-100.

Speaker Thomas O'Neill named Rep. Louis Stokes (D., Ohio) to preside over the uncertain inquiry, which will go out of business March 31 unless the House votes to continue it.

Stokes' appointment was seen as a sign of hope only for the investigation of the murder of Martin Luther King Jr. The Cleveland Democrat is one of the four members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were appointed to the 12-member committee last September as a result of caucus' special interest in the King assassination.

Gonzalez lasted as chairman little more than a month. Appointed Feb. 2 with what he regarded as a mandate to take firm command and deal with the committee's overextended finances, he ran into resistance from chief counsel Richard Sprague but was overruled by all 11 other members of the committee when he tried to fire Sprague.



STOKES

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

11-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 3-9-77
Edition:
Author:
Editor:
Title: MARTIN LUTHER KING

Character: 44-1854*
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-797

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 11 1977	
FBI-MIAMI	

#9

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Assassination panel to hear James Earl Ray

Combined Miami News Services

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — James Earl Ray, convicted of murdering Dr. Martin Luther King, will give preliminary depositions to the House Assassinations Committee next week, his attorney said today.

Jack Kershaw, retained three weeks ago as Ray's lawyer, said the session will be conducted by the committee's deputy chief counsel and two court reporters at the Brushy Mountain State Prison in Petros, Tenn. Ray is serving a 99-year sentence there.

The attorney said he has new evidence that will aid the assassinations probe, but he declined to reveal it.

Kershaw said, however, that Ray will not testify before the special committee merely to support his original guilty plea.

"Like Mr. Ray just said, he wouldn't go before them just to prove he was guilty," Kershaw said, referring to a statement his client made in an interview with CBS television.

Ray originally pleaded guilty to killing Martin Luther King in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968, but he later asked to retract his plea. His request was refused.

Kershaw said Ray "hasn't had a forum before" to tell his story.

"At that time (of the conviction), the establishment was looking for a victim. Right then, Ray was victimized," Kershaw said. "It will be my contention that he never plotted together, never breathed together, to murder King. He was a victim of a conspiracy, just like King was."

Ray contended in an interview on the CBS program "Who's Who" last night that he had been sent to have a tire fixed when King was assassinated and that he was set up to take the blame.

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

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

1-AMIAMI NEWSMIAMI, FLA.Date: 3-16-77

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title: JAMES EARL RAYCharacter: 44-1854*
or

Classification:

Submitting Office MIAMI, FLA.☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-798

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 18 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

#9

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

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

He said the attendants at a service station told him they were too busy to fix the tire because of the hour. King was assassinated shortly before 6 p.m., the traffic rush-hour period.

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

Ray said Raoul had been directing him in gun-running activities for a year. He said there was nothing to distinguish Raoul except that he had auburn hair, not black hair like most Latin people he knew.

But Ray said he and Raoul had never discussed killing King and so he did not know why King was killed.

He said he believes the most plausible theory is the one that King was killed to halt his civil rights activities.

Ray pleaded guilty to killing King but tried to recant that plea three days later and his efforts since then to get a new trial have been turned down all the way to the Supreme Court.

He said in the interview he pleaded guilty because "I determined there was no way I could force Percy Foreman (his lawyer) to go to trial with any prospect of success.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Mobster Takes Fifth, Ray to Talk

Trafficante Is Queried About JFK Panel to Question King's Assassin

From Herald Wire Services

WASHINGTON — Mafia chieftain Santo Trafficante Jr. refused to tell a congressional committee Wednesday whether he had advance knowledge of the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Subpenaed by the House Select Committee on Assassinations for its first hearing into Kennedy's murder, Trafficante invoked his constitutional rights in response to every question put to him.

Meanwhile, the lawyer for James Earl Ray, the convicted murderer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said that his client will submit to preliminary questioning next week by a lawyer from the assassinations panel.

ATTORNEY Jack Kershaw said he has new evidence that will aid the probe, but he declined to disclose it.

Trafficante, the Florida underworld boss — who lives at 740 N.E. 155th St., in North Dade, and who also maintains a house in Tampa — Wednesday hunched close to the microphone in front of him and declared fourteen times in all:

"I respectfully refuse to answer that question pursuant to my constitutional rights under the First, the Fourth and Fifth and the Fourteenth Amendments."

THE COMMITTEE'S chief counsel, Richard A. Sprague, conducted most of the interrogation, asking Trafficante about his reported par-

Turn to Page 18A Col. 1

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

1-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

3-17-77

Date:

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title:

JAMES EARL RAY

Character:

or

44-1854*

Classification:

Submitting Office MIAMI, FLA.

☐ Being Investigated

44-1854-799

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 18 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

FROM PAGE 1A

ticipation — along with two other gangland figures — in CIA-sponsored plots in the early 1960s to assassinate Cuban President Fidel Castro, about reports that Trafficante predicted Kennedy's "hit" more than a year in advance, and about rumors that Trafficante may have been acquainted with "an American gangster type named Ruby" years before the President's death.

The two other gangland plotters reportedly enlisted by the CIA, Sam (Momo) Giancana of Chicago and his longtime lieutenant, Johnny Rosselli, were killed following the initiation of a Senate Intelligence Committee investigation of CIA assassination plots.

RAY'S LAWYER, Kershaw, said in Nashville, Tenn., that Ray will give depositions to the committee's chief deputy counsel in a session at the Brushy Mountain State Prison at Petros, Tenn.

"He (Ray) wouldn't go before (the committee) just to prove he was guilty," Kershaw said.

He said a number of questions surround the killing, including the mysterious Latin named Raoul whom Ray has said was his contact before King was killed.

Ray has said that he believed Raoul wanted him to take part in a gun-running deal.

"He (Ray) was contacted by a man in Canada. He called him Raoul, a small man who he said smoked a lot of cigars," Kershaw said.

KERSHAW SAID a pair of trousers fitting a small man were found in the boarding house room from which the shot that killed King apparently was fired in Memphis in 1968. In addition, he said, the white Mustang allegedly used by Ray as a getaway car contained an ashtray filled with cigaret butts. "And Ray doesn't smoke," Kershaw said.

shaw said.

"It will be my contention that he never plotted together, never breathed together, to murder King. He was a victim of a conspiracy, just like King was," Kershaw said.

Committee Chairman Louis Stokes (D., Ohio) excused Trafficante after warning him that he could be cited for contempt of Congress.

THE QUESTIONS concerning Jack Ruby turned on Trafficante's days in Cuba, where he was overlord of syndicate gambling in Havana before Castro toppled the Batista government in the 1959 revolution and closed down the casinos. Trafficante was even lodged for a time in a Cuban jail.

Sprague asked: "Mr. Trafficante, while you were in prison in Cuba, were you visited by Jack Ruby?" Trafficante wouldn't answer.

The inquiry may have stemmed from a once-classified CIA memo from Warren Commission files

about the conversation of a British journalist named John Wilson at the U.S. Embassy in London shortly after the President's assassination and after Lee Harvey Oswald's murder by Ruby. Wilson reportedly told of meeting an American "gangster-gambler named Santos"

in jail in Cuba after the 1959 revolution who "was visited by an American gangster-type named Ruby."

Two Assassinations — Two Attitudes

*'He (Ray) wouldn't go before
(the committee) just to prove he
was guilty.'*

— Attorney Jack Kershaw



*'I respectfully refuse to answer
that question pursuant to my
constitutional rights under the
First, the Fourth and Fifth and
the Fourteenth Amendments.'*

— Santo Trafficante



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Police, FBI Plotted to Kill King, Lawmaker Quotes Retired Officer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — (AP) — The House Select Committee on Assassinations is investigating allegations from a man who claims



KING

that several members of a police department and FBI agents plotted to kill Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rep. Gene Snyder (R., Ky.) said Saturday.

Snyder said he met the man "face to face" and that "he appeared to be rational, a logical kind of man."

Snyder said he got a letter from the man and listened to a tape that the man said he made of the alleged assassination plot. Snyder refused to say whether the man or the police department involved were in Kentucky.

ASKED WHY the man contacted him and let him listen to a copy of the tape recording, Snyder said, "He may have just been looking for someone with nerve, a fighter."

Snyder read part of the letter and used the word "blank" where the man had used names.

"I retired from (blank) police department in (blank) after serving (blank) years," Snyder quoted the letter as saying. "While I was in the police department I was innocently involved in a conspiracy to assassinate Dr. Martin Luther King."

"Involved in this conspiracy were agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, agents (blank),

(blank) and (blank) and others that I did not know," Snyder said, continuing to read the letter. "Members of the (blank) police department, chief of detectives, captain (blank), lieutenant (blank), officer (blank), lieutenant (blank) of the homicide bureau and president of the FOP sergeant (blank)."

FOP STANDS for Fraternal Order of Police, an organization for police officers.

Snyder said he could not divulge the names listed in the letter or the identity of the man who contacted him.

"What I'm saying," Snyder said, "is those blanks need to be protected if there's nothing to this. And if it is an accurate allegation that he's made, then the author of the letter needs to be protected. The committee is investigating it."

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

14-A

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FBI-MIAMI	

#9-

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

King Murder Bullet To Be Tested Again

THE HOUSE Assassinations Committee announced that it will conduct independent ballistics tests next week on the bullet that killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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

Chairman Walter Fauntroy, Washington D.C. delegate, said two ballistics tests will be made by separate professionals and not the FBI.

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

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

28-A

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44-1854-801

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MAR 21 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

CC 62-6603

#19-

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Cop Was Offered \$500,000 To Kill King, Wife Confirms

The wife of a retired Louisville, Ky., police officer confirmed Wednesday that her husband told Rep. Gene Snyder that he was offered \$500,000 on two occasions to kill Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Mary Baird, 44, said her husband Clifton who was not in Louisville and was not available for comment, told Snyder of an offer he said was made by members of the Louisville Police Department and several FBI agents.

She said her husband, 50, retired from the Louisville police department several years ago after 27 years' service.

"HE TOLD ME about this when I first married him, seven years ago," Mrs. Baird said. "I think he thought he wasn't going to be believed."

She said she believes one reason he came forward a second time with the allegation was because "he wants to know why someone asked him" to kill the civil rights leader, who was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968.

She said her husband, before contacting Snyder, told one of James Earl Ray's attorneys of the alleged plot. She said her husband was "discouraged" after he told the attorney.

Ray is serving 99 years in prison for the slaying of King.

Snyder, who disclosed last week that he had heard from a man who claimed knowledge of a plot to kill King, had refused to divulge the man's name.

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

"I CAN'T SAY any more, but he's just not that type of person," she said.

Asked why her husband thought he was asked, Mrs. Baird responded: "That's the \$64 question. He wants to know why someone asked him."

Snyder said earlier this week that he had met the man "face to face" and was convinced he was a "rational" man. In fact, Snyder said he changed his mind about voting to extend financing for the House Select Committee on Assassinations solely because of his conversation with the man.

In Washington, the House Assassinations Committee approved a \$28-million budget request and

then went into closed session to look at evidence on the murders of King and President John Kennedy.

The biggest cut from the committee's earlier, controversial \$6.5-million proposal was a \$2.3-million slice to cut the staff from 170 persons to 115. The budget figures are for this year.

Chief counsel Richard Sprague told the committee that means the two investigations will take longer and "we'll have to wait and see" whether they can be completed during the two-year life of the current Congress.

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

2-A

MIAMI HERALD

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Author:

Editor:

Title: MARTIN LUTHER KI

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MAR 25 1977

FBI - MIAMI

#9

23



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No. 62-6603

Miami, Florida
March 25, 1977

RE: HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE
ON ASSASSINATIONS

An article appearing in the "Miami Herald" newspaper, Miami, Florida, dated March 14, 1977, captioned "KING Panel Might Call Miami Man", is attached hereto.

In regards to certain allegations and statements contained in the "Miami Herald" newspaper article, the following is noted:

Miami Office files contain no reference reflecting receipt of the information allegedly furnished by WILLIAM SOMERSETT relative to his claim that he overheard a death threat at a union affair in Washington as set forth in said article.

In connection with the statement in the article by CHARLES SAPP, formerly of the Miami Police Department, a review of Miami files does not show the receipt of any information from CHARLES SAPP furnished to him by WILLIAM SOMERSETT.

On March 23, 1977, Supervisor LEONARD C. PETERSON of the Miami Office of the FBI, who was in periodic contact with personnel of the Miami Police Department, Intelligence Division, during 1968, advised that he did not receive and knows of no other FBI employee who received any information concerning a death threat against Reverend MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., during that period.

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

Searched.....
Serialized.....
Indexed.....
Filed.....

JS

44-1854-803

King Panel Might Call Miami Man

House Panel Contacts
Ex-Police Lieutenant

By JIM BUCHANAN
Herald Staff Writer

A former Miami police lieutenant said Sunday that he may be called to testify before a congressional committee about receiving a pre-assassination tip in 1968 that Martin Luther King might be killed.

Charles Sapp, the former policeman, said the information came in April 1968 from a Miami Police Department paid informant, Willie Somerset, who five years earlier had claimed advance notice of President John Kennedy's assassination.

"I've been contacted by a spokesman for the House Assassinations Committee," Sapp said Sunday, "and I've told them I'd be happy to testify as to what I know."

SAPP SAID he "can't recall the exact time element, but it was shortly before King was killed." King was killed on April 4, 1968.

Other sources told The Herald that the telephoned tip was received by the lieutenant April 3. Sapp, who retired in 1971, headed the department's intelligence-gathering unit.

Somerset, an admitted racist who then was trying to organize his own National Foundation of Labor, "claimed to have overheard the death threat at a union affair in Washington," according to Sapp.

"He said he overheard two men condemning King for meddling in union affairs. If you remember, King was helping the Memphis sanitation workers, who were out on strike," Sapp said.

"Somerset told me the men said they'd have to 'take care of King,' or words to that effect."

"SOMERSET called me because he wanted me to know he was in Miami and shouldn't be suspected if something happened."

Somerset was once a member of the National States Rights Party and claimed to have heard, during a conversation 13 days before the Kennedy slaying, of plans to shoot him.

Sapp said Sunday, "I can't remember the exact day he called me, but I'm certain the FBI got an immediate report on the tip, because the agents were in our office every day, and they got the same information I sent on to the chief."

Sapp's distant connection with the King case came to light last September as part of a Miami magazine article dealing with the assassinations of King and Kennedy.

Two weeks ago, Sapp said, he was contacted by an investigator for the House committee.

"WE TALKED for a while, and he said they'd be in touch with me. But I haven't heard anything from them yet," Sapp said.

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☒ Airtel

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ E F T O
☐ CLEAR

Date 3/25/77

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
 FROM: SAC, MIAMI (62-6603) (P)
 SUBJECT: HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE
 ON ASSASSINATIONS

Re Bureau airtel to Miami dated 3/17/77.

Enclosed for the Bureau is one copy of the following described "Miami Magazine" articles:

1. Article entitled, "JFK, KING; The Dade County Links" by DON CHRISTENSEN, which appeared in the September, 1976, issue of "Miami Magazine".

2. Article entitled, "KING Assassination; FBI Ignored Its Miami Informer", by DON CHRISTENSEN, which appeared in the October, 1976, issue of "Miami Magazine".

Also enclosed are seven copies of an LHM reflecting information concerning "Miami Herald" newspaper article, dated March 14, 1977, captioned, "KING Panel Might Call Miami Man".

Enclosed for the Memphis Division is one copy each of the foregoing described enclosures.

In regards to the inquiry by the House Select Committee into the Kennedy assassination and their request for "the listing of all FBI Agents present at the November 10, 1963, meeting in Miami, Florida, with members of the Miami Police Department Intelligence Section, at which time the taped conversation between JOSEPH A. MILTEER and WILLIAM SOMERSETT was made available to the FBI", Miami FBI records do not contain any information that FBI Agents were present at such a meeting.

3 - Bureau (Encs. 9)
 2 - Memphis (Encs. 3)
 4 - Miami (1 - 62-6603) (1 - 44-1854)
 (1 - 89-35) (1 - 170-1)

DJD:mes

Approved: (9)

Transmitted

(Number)

(Time)

Per

44-1854-804

MM 62-6603

Miami files do contain information that WILLIAM SOMERSETT telephonically contacted Miami Division on 11/10/63, and advised that a conversation between JOSEPH A. MILTEER and himself had been tape recorded by the Miami Police Department.

This information was furnished to the Bureau by Miami teletype dated 11/10/63, under the caption, "THREAT TO KILL PRESIDENT KENNEDY BY J. A. MILTEER", at Miami, Florida, on 11/9/63.

Miami records reflect that on November 11, 1963, Sergeant CHARLES SAPP, Miami Police Department, advised the Miami Division of the FBI that a conversation between WILLIAM SOMERSETT and JOSEPH A. MILTEER, had been tape recorded by his department.

Miami records show that on November 12, 1963, the Miami Police Department furnished a transcribed copy of the taped conversation between SOMERSETT and MILTEER to SA LEONARD C. PETERSON of the Miami Division.

Copy of this transcript was furnished to the Bureau by an airtel dated 11/13/63, under the "J. A. MILTEER, RACIAL MATTERS, OO: ATLANTA" caption.

Miami records show that WILLIAM SOMERSETT was a discontinued informant who had been turned over to the Miami Police Department and was not being contacted by the Miami Division of the FBI per Bureau instructions dated 11/13/61.

However, any information SOMERSETT volunteered to the Miami FBI was accepted and appropriately disseminated.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

House Extends Assassinations Probe After Panel's Chief Counsel Resigns

By AARON EPSTEIN
Herald Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The House late Wednesday gave new life to its embattled Select Committee on Assassinations to follow its "new leads" in the investigations of the murders of President John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The 230-181 vote came after the sudden resignation of the committee's controversial chief counsel, Richard Sprague, the suicide near Palm Beach of a "key witness" in the Kennedy inquiry and four hours of stormy debate on the House floor.

The seven-month-old committee, which had been mired for most of its existence in a bitter feud between Sprague and former committee Chairman Henry B. Gonzalez (D., Tex.), would have gone out of business if the House had failed to issue a new authorization.

THE COMMITTEE, which is asking for a slashed budget of \$2.7 million for 1977, now may continue its investigations through 1978.

In Florida's House delegation, those voting to extend the committee's life were Democrats Gibbons, Lehman, Pepper and Rogers. Voting against the extension were Democrats Bennett, Chappell, Fascell, Ireland and Sikes, and Republicans Bafalis, Burke, Frey, Kelly and Young. Democrat Fuqua did not vote.

The witness who shot himself was George de Mohrenschildt, who was identified by the Warren Commission as a confidant of Kennedy assassin Lee Harvey Oswald and who had indicated in a published interview that he felt responsible

for the assassination.

De Mohrenschildt shot himself, Palm Beach sheriff's deputies said, one hour after an assassinations committee investigator, former Philadelphia reporter Gaeton Fonzi, telephoned him to ask him to testify.

THE CRUCIAL factor in the rescue of the committee was Sprague's resignation shortly before midnight Tuesday.

Committee members said they had made a survey of House members and learned that they would lose by about 25 votes if Sprague stayed on as chief counsel, but could swing 40 members to their side if Sprague were removed.

"The members were concerned about Sprague because they had gotten the impression he was arrogant and abrasive. Sprague was informed of the situation and he resigned to keep the investigation going," committee member Robert W. Edgar (D., Pa.) said.

In his letter of resignation, Sprague said he hoped his move would allow the committee to pursue the investigations promptly. He left immediately for a vacation in Mexico and could not be reached for comment.

IN A HASTILY called morning meeting, the committee members lauded Sprague's integrity, ability and courage, likening him to a sacrificial lamb. One member suggested he should get the Congressional Medal of Honor. His resignation was approved, 11-1.

Later, on the House floor, oppos-

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

26-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

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#9

nents of the committee agreed that the investigative trails had grown cold, that the Justice Department would be better able to look into the assassination conspiracy theories, that the committee had produced no new evidence and that taxpayers' money would continue to be wasted.

Robert E. Bauman (R., Md.) said the committee had been "hopping along like the Toonerville Trolley" and the resignation of Sprague was "like Kaiser Wilhelm dismissing Chancellor Bismarck."

BUT, IN THE end, most House members seemed to agree with Richard Bolling (D., Mo.) that the American people are "uneasy" about the previous investigations of the Kennedy and King assassinations and "deserve from their servants every possible effort to dispel that unease."

The opponents, led by Bauman, failed to win approval of a motion to hold a rare secret session of the entire House to find out exactly what Sprague's investigators have uncovered. That effort failed by 41 votes.

But Bauman succeeded in killing the committee's request for permission to file lawsuits without prior House approval.

The committee said it sought that power — which some members called "unprecedented" — to obtain grand jury data and FBI tapes, get recalcitrant witnesses held in civil contempt, prevent the destruction of a boarding house from which, it is alleged, King was shot, and "to stage a reenactment of an event."



Richard Sprague
... sacrificial lamb?



Rep. Henry Gonzalez
... opposed Sprague

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

JFK probe witness shot; police feel it's suicide

**JFK prober
fears vote,
so he quits**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Richard Sprague, embattled chief lawyer for the House assassinations committee, has resigned after being convinced the House would kill the investigation if he remained on the job.

The House votes today on whether to continue the investigation of the murders of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. If the vote fails, the investigation ends at midnight tomorrow.

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

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

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

1-AMIAMI NEWSMIAMI, FLA.

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FBI - MIAMI	

#9

The source said Sprague would not retract his resignation even if asked. "It's unrevocable on his part."

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

His letter, addressed to Stokes and the other 10 members of the committee, said:

"I am hereby submitting my resignation, effective immediately, as chief counsel and staff director of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. I do so with the hope that the Congress can now proceed with the challenge of seeing that these investigations are pursued promptly."

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



RICHARD SPRAGUE

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Cox News Service

PALM BEACH — A friend of Lee Harvey Oswald who recently was quoted as saying he had prior knowledge of the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, apparently shot himself to death here yesterday shortly after he was contacted by a congressional investigator.

The body of George de Mohrenschildt, 65, was found by his daughter Alexandra, 33, in the guest room of the palatial ocean-side home of Mrs. Charles Tilton III in Palm Beach. He and his daughter had arrived there from Brussels for a visit with relatives.

Lt. Richard Sheets of the Palm Beach County sheriff's office said there was "no reason to suspect anything other than suicide, but the investigation is continuing."

According to Palm Beach County Sheriff Richard Wille, de Mohrenschildt returned to the Tilton home at about 2:45 p.m. yesterday and learned that a staff investigator for the Assassinations Committee had been trying to reach him in regard to his testifying before the committee in Washington.

Wille said it appeared that de Mohrenschildt became extremely upset when he learned of the investigator's efforts to reach him.

De Mohrenschildt, a professor at Bishop College in Dallas, disappeared from the college about three weeks ago. He was quoted by Dutch journalist William Oltmans as having made a "shocking confession" that de Mohrenschildt knew in advance what Oswald was going to do.

Oltmans said de Mohrenschildt made the revelation during an interview in February. Oltmans said he gave that information to the Assassinations Committee and following that, he and de Mohrenschildt then went to Europe where, according to Oltmans, de Mohrenschildt "disappeared."

Although de Mohrenschildt was due back at the college March 21, officials there said he didn't report for his classes.

Washington officials believe de Mohrenschildt may have some "evidence" in his possession that could incriminate him in Oswald's activities, sources said. Washington officials also reportedly "have been looking everywhere" for de Moh-

Continued from Page 1A

renschildt to bring him before the committee.

The source said Washington officials believe the "evidence" may be a photograph, possibly a tape and a manuscript now in the possession of a Dallas attorney. Washington

officials last night were "scrambling around trying to get subpoenas" in an effort to get their hands on that materiel, sources said.

De Mohrenschildt was being interviewed yesterday by writer El Epstein in connection with a book Epstein is writing about Oswald.

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

1-A

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FBI - MIAMI

Continued on 4A, Col. 3



Associated Press Wirephoto

George de Mohrenschildt and wife holding a photo of JFK

Witness in JFK probe possible suicide victim

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

'Key' JFK Witness Who Killed Himself Feared Investigation

By STEVE SONSKY
And TIM PALLESEN
Herald Staff Writers

MANALAPAN, Fla. — The Russian-born confidant of Lee Harvey Oswald who killed himself an hour after he talked to an investigator looking into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was despondent, wracked by marital problems and felt threatened by congressional interest in his knowledge of Oswald.

George de Mohrenschildt, 65, who shot himself with a 20-gauge shotgun Tuesday, had been questioned repeatedly by the Warren Commission in its probe of the Kennedy assassination.

The Russian-born geologist and professor of French had been a close associate of Oswald and his wife Marina when the two lived in Dallas.

INTEREST IN him heightened when the House Select Committee on Assassinations vowed to retrace the steps of the Warren Commission and a Dutch journalist reported that de Mohrenschildt somehow felt responsible for the assassination.

The journalist, Willem Oltmans, said, "He asked me, 'How do you think the media would react if I came out and said I feel responsible for Oswald's behavior?'"

Shortly after the quote was reported, committee staff members intensified their search for the much traveled professor.

Tuesday, staff investigator Gaeton J. Fonzi contacted De Mohrenschildt where he was staying at the home of friends in Manalapan. He left a message asking the professor to testify before the committee and an hour later De Mohrenschildt placed a 20-gauge shotgun in his mouth and pulled the trigger.

DE MOHRENSCHILDT'S value as a witness is the subject of debate in the committee itself.

Committee member Robert W. Edgar (D., Pa.) believes he would have been an "extremely significant" witness and quotes a Warren Commission witness as saying, "If there were any plotters in the assassination, it was this guy." And Rep. Richard Preyer (D., N.C.), another member of the committee, agreed that De Mohrenschildt would have been a key witness in the reopened assassination probe.

But one staff investigator doubts that the Russian emigré had anything of value to report.

"I find it highly suspicious that De Mohrenschildt didn't say anything for 12 years and then we see motion from him just as the committee was formed," the staff member said. "We have no reason to believe his death was anything but suicide," he said.

TWO OTHER committee witnesses died shortly before and after they testified. Mobster John Roselli was killed after he testified and Chicago gang boss Sam Giancana was killed shortly before he was scheduled to testify. Some say the murders were somehow connected to the assassination; others maintain that they were not.

If De Mohrenschildt's suicide can be related to the testimony he was about to give to the committee, it will bolster claims that the panel was turning up new evidence in the assassination probe.

The committee's life would have expired at midnight Wednesday, but the House voted Wednesday afternoon to extend its activities for two years.

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

26-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

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APR 1 1977

FBI - MIAMI

#9

De Mohrenschildt was described by an associate at Bishop College, where he taught, as a friendly, outgoing man always willing to champion the cause of the down trodden. But in the last year he began to show signs of having deep emotional problems.

FOR ABOUT six weeks last year De Mohrenschildt was treated for depression at Dallas' Parkland Hos-

pital psychiatric division.

According to John Dvorak, a public information officer at Bishop College, De Mohrenschildt suffered deeply when his wife left him and in early March he asked for an indefinite leave of absence because his daughter was ill.

"He was definitely a disturbed man. Seemingly he'd aged. He was much more nervous. His conversation was more sketchy and it was like he couldn't stay still in one spot," Dvorak said.

That jibed with testimony on the House floor Wednesday by congressmen trying to end the life of the select committee. Several House members described De Mohrenschildt as a deeply trouble man with severe mental problems. They called committee pursuit of him "irresponsible."

DE MOHRENSCHILDT was a house guest at the oceanside home of Nancy Tilton, his sister-in-law, when he killed himself at about 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Palm Beach County sheriff's deputies said.

The body was discovered by De Mohrenschildt's daughter, Alexandra, 33, at about 3:45 p.m. Neither De Mohrenschildt's daughter nor the Tiltons were at home when the shooting took place. But two maids in the house at the time of the shooting were apparently tape recording a television show. And although they didn't themselves hear the shotgun blast, deputies said it was audible on the tape.

Lt. Richard Sheets, chief of detectives for the Palm Beach County sheriff's office, said that the "police were in possession of certain personal papers" of De Mohrenschildt, but he declined to comment on what those papers were, or whether they linked De Mohrenschildt further to Oswald.

SHEETS SAID he passed those personal papers on to the FBI and committee member Edgar said the committee would take immediate steps to gather those and other papers belonging to De Mohrenschildt.

De Mohrenschildt went to Brussels, Belgium, after he was granted his leave at Bishop and didn't appear for classes that began March 21. College officials thought he would be gone only a few days.

An autopsy performed Wednesday confirmed suicide as the cause of death.

De Mohrenschildt's body was found in a drawing room adjacent to a second-floor bedroom in the Tilton home, located at 1780 S. Ocean Blvd. No suicide note was left. And the shotgun, found near the body, belonged to the Tiltons and was believed taken from a closet.

THE TILTON home, an old, wood-frame structure painted brown and green, was under tight sheriff's guard Wednesday. "They don't want to speak with anyone. They just want to lead their own lives," sheriff's Sgt. Al Vidal told reporters seeking interviews with the Tiltons. De Mohrenschildt and his daughter had been at the Tilton residence since March 17.



Lee Harvey Oswald

... knew De Mohrenschildt



— United Press International

De Mohrenschildt and His Wife Jeanne
... he'd been asked to testify before assassination panel

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

King Killer Cites Pressure by FBI

PETROS, Tenn. — James Earl

Ray told House investigators Thursday that the FBI tried to pressure him into naming alleged conspirators in the assassination of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Ray's attorney said.

Attorney Jack Kershaw met with reporters after Robert Lehner, who is heading the King portion of the House Assassination Committee's investigation, spent more than six hours with Ray behind the walls of Brushy Mountain State Prison. Ray is serving a 99-year sentence for the 1968 murder of the civil rights leader.

"I find today that the FBI is involved in this case, in my opinion, in an improper way," Kershaw said. "FBI pressure was brought upon James Earl Ray by means of threatening members of his family."

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

17-A

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MIAMI, FLA.

Date: 4-15-77

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Author:

Editor:

Title: JAMES EARL RAY

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☐ Being Investigated

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APR 18 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Told Probers That He Had Help Before, After Slaying, Sprague Says

Los Angeles Times Service

WASHINGTON — James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King, has told House investigators that he got help before and after the slaying, the former chief counsel of the House Select Committee on Assassinations said Monday.

Richard Sprague, who interviewed Ray at the Brushy Mountain State Prison in Tennessee last month, said Ray talked about several accomplices but did not identify them.

"All of this suggests that this (Ray) was a person who did not act alone," Sprague said.

SPRAGUE CALLED a press conference to give his version of the events that led to his departure as the assassination committee's chief of staff March 30.

Sprague conceded that he doesn't have information that might either prove or disprove Ray's claims. But he said Ray, who pleaded guilty to the 1968 slaying and is serving a 99-year prison sentence, gave him leads that should be explored.

Ray has been trying for years to withdraw his guilty plea and win a full trial. In recent statements, he has maintained that the civil rights leader was killed by a Latin whom Ray knew only as "Raoul." Ray said he bought the rifle that apparently was the murder weapon, but gave it to Raoul for what he thought was a gun-running operation.



RAY

Ray claimed that he was helped by individuals other than his two brothers or Raoul. Sprague said Ray told him the aid came at least three times: when Ray escaped from the Missouri State Prison about a year before the King murder, when he left the United States briefly before the assassination, and immediately after King was slain.

THE ACCOMPLICES gave Ray a gun to help him escape in Missouri and money several times in the year before the King killing, Sprague said he had been told. He said the gun was not the one used to shoot King.

A Justice Department task force recently found no evidence that Ray was part of a conspiracy, although the report said the source of Ray's funds "remains a mystery." Ray spent more than \$10,000 during the year while his earnings were just a little more than \$600.

Ray has said in public that he got money from Raoul. But Sprague said he concluded, after talking with Ray, that the Raoul story was a fabrication.

THE JUSTICE Department task force determined that Ray got assistance from members of his family, particularly his brothers Jerry and John, after his escape from prison. The report chided the FBI for not investigating Jerry and John Ray more thoroughly. But the

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

18-A

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MIAMI, FLA.

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task force concluded the ~~brothers~~ were not part of a conspiracy to kill King.

Sprague was bitter about his experience as a congressional investigator. He said he had just begun to win Ray's confidence when he was asked to resign to appease critics in the House who had said they would vote to disband the committee if Sprague remained.

Sprague, a former Philadelphia prosecutor, said his investigation was hampered by pressure from committee members for sensational revelations to "titillate the public."

"THE CONGRESS of the United States is not the proper agency nor the proper branch of government to conduct an investigation of any crime, not just these crimes," Sprague said.

"Can you imagine what it is like to try to interview people when you have to fight off members of the committee who want to sit in on the interviews because they think it will get them into the limelight?" he said.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

House OKs King, JFK Probe Fund

From Herald Wire Services

WASHINGTON — The House Assassination Committee won full House approval Thursday of a \$2.5-million budget to continue its investigation into the killings of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

The House voted 213-192 to adopt the budget for the committee's work through this year, but only after the panel came under heavy criticism.

"I would hope we could end this unnecessary, wasteful, counterproductive effort. The Justice Department should do the investigating if that is necessary," said Rep. Robert Bauman (D., Md.)

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

21-AMIAMI HERALDMIAMI, FLA.CCI. Bauman

Date: 4-29-77
Edition:
Author:
Editor:
Title: MARTIN LUTHER KING

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APR 29 1977	
FBI - MIAMI	

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

King's Protector Ordered Off Job In a Conspiracy?

By JAMES COATES
Chicago Tribune Service

WASHINGTON — Investigators for the House Committee on Assassinations are exploring allegations that a black Memphis police detective was relieved from his assignment to guard Martin Luther King Jr. as part of a conspiracy involving top federal officials.

The policeman, Ed Redditt, was assigned to protect King during his 1968 trip to Memphis, but was pulled off the assignment two hours before the slaying by local officials acting on advice from Washington.

Sources familiar with the current congressional investigation disclosed that House investigators have developed new and conflicting information about Redditt's transfer, even though the Justice Department had looked into the matter earlier.

REDDITT'S ACCOUNT has been cited by supporters of the conspiracy theory of King's death as major evidence of government participation at some level. Two of the supporters, Mark Lane and comedian Dick Gregory, will publish a book Tuesday based on Redditt's case.

A witness familiar with Redditt's transfer told The Tribune that an unidentified "federal law enforcement official" flew to Memphis the day of King's assassination to warn about a threat on Redditt's life.

It was learned from this source that congressional investigators have been given information different from that supplied to the Justice Department earlier this year. The department concluded at that time that there was no evidence that the FBI had participated in a plot to assassinate the civil rights leader.

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

2-A

MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI, FLA.

Date: MAY 1, 1977

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Title: MARTIN LUTHER KING
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Martin Luther King
... black guard relieved

The new information involves the source of the threat on Redditt's life that prompted his superior, Frank Holloman, then Memphis police director, to remove him from a stakeout on King shortly before the assassination.

The Justice Department had concluded that the threat against Redditt involved the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, but congressional investigators have now been told that the threat came from a New Jersey group.

ACTING ON this threat, the source said, Holloman summoned Redditt, leaving only one patrolman to protect King's entourage at the Lorraine Motel.

Redditt was the Memphis police department's expert on King, and his familiarity with members of King's party as well as local and federal officers on the scene would have enabled him to recognize any stranger when the shot was fired.

Based on the Mississippi report, the Justice Department found a Senate investigator named Phillip Manuel who was visiting police in Memphis the day King was killed. Although Manuel now says he doesn't remember warning about a

threat against Redditt, the Justice Department concluded that he was the mysterious Washington official.

Holloman has told numerous investigators that because of the extreme excitement caused by King's death and subsequent riots, he can remember only that the warning came from a Washington law enforcement official.

The Justice Department, however, maintains that since Manuel was not a law enforcement official, Redditt's transfer does not connect the FBI to a conspiracy.

WHILE THE House investigation examines inconsistencies in the source of the threat, Redditt — now retired — plans to go public this week to promote Lane and Gregory's book.

Their book, a sensational account implicating FBI officials in a conspiracy, has prompted House investigators to examine several aspects of Redditt's account and other points the authors raised. Lane and Gregory did not know about the New Jersey angle when they wrote their book.

Their publisher, Prentice Hall, has scheduled a press conference in Washington Tuesday. Lane has been criticized for omitting key details from his conspiracy theories about the assassination of King and President Kennedy, but has gained widespread publicity for his views.

QUESTIONS RAISED by Lane and other conspiracy advocates are credited by both Republican and Democratic congressmen with the decision to spend \$2.5 million investigating the death of King and Kennedy.

Much of the committee's early work has involved the compilation of massive files tracing the chain of events, which Lane and others charge were orchestrated by the late FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover.

A committee spokesman said that a research team has begun a computerized filing system to cross-index and compile hundreds of thousands of secret and public documents dealing with the assassinations of King and Kennedy.

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Precedence ROUTINE

To: SAC, MIAMI

Date: 6/2/77

From: SAC, SEATTLE (44-371)

Time: Transmitted:

Subject: ✓ 44-1854* 4668
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Initials:

☐ Fingerprint Photo☐ Fingerprint Record☐ Map☐ Newspaper clipping☐ Photograph☐ Artists Conception☐ Other _____

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Approved: JMR/spr

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44-1854-813

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NO 2110.2 REGARDING WITNESS PROTECTION. THIS ORDER STATES
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WITNESS AND MEMBERS OF A WITNESS FAMILY IS A FEDERAL
CRIMINAL PROCEEDING IS A LOCAL OR STATE POLICE MATTER TO
BE HANDLED BY THOSE AUTHORITIES. EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY
WILL BE ALLOWED ONLY UPON THE FINDING OF THE ASSISTANT
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE CONSUMER DIVISION THAT THE

PAGE TWO AT (44-371) CLEAR

PROTECTED WITNESS MEETS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- (1) THE PERSON IS A QUALIFYING WITNESS IN A SPECIFIC CASE IN PROTECTIVE ORDER OR AFTER A GRAND JURY PROCEEDING;
- (2) EVIDENCE IN POSSESSION INDICATES THAT THE LIFE OF THE WITNESS AND/OR THAT OF A MEMBER OF THE WITNESS FAMILY OR HOUSEHOLD IS IN IMMEDIATE JEOPARDY AND (3) EVIDENCE IN POSSESSION INDICATES IT WILL BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE FEDERAL INTEREST FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO PROTECT THE WITNESS AND/OR A FAMILY OR HOUSEHOLD MEMBER. THIS ORDER STATES THAT REQUESTS FOR PROTECTION OF A WITNESS SHALL BE MADE THROUGH THE U. S. ATTORNEY OR BY A DIVISION ATTORNEY OF THE DEPARTMENT. ACCORDINGLY, YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT LAMONICA IS ADVISED THAT IF HE DESIRES TO PURSUE THIS MATTER UNDER THE WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM, HE SHOULD CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE U. S. ATTORNEY AND/OR THE DEPARTMENT FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT HE IS A QUALIFYING WITNESS AS SET FORTH ABOVE. YOU SHOULD ALSO ADVISE LAMONICA TO NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE FEARS HE HAS FOR HIS PERSONAL SAFETY AND THAT OF HIS FAMILY.

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MURKIN. OO: MEMPHIS.

RE SEATTLE TEL CALL TO BUREAU, JUNE 1, 1977.

AT APPROXIMATELY 6:45 P.M., PDST, JUNE 1, 1977, SAC SEATTLE RECEIVED CALL FROM INDIVIDUAL IDENTIFYING HIMSELF AS (X) KEITH ERNEST LAMONICA (X). LAMONICA ADVISED HE IS NEWS DIRECTOR WITH KYYX RADIO, 1305 - 3RD AVENUE, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, TEL.

682-2828. (LAMONICA IDENTICAL WITH BUFILE 46-53387, CAPTIONED KEITH ERNEST LAMONICA; DALE CURTIS TORNIO, FAG, OO: SEATTLE.)

LAMONICA DESCRIBED PREVIOUS ASSOCIATION WITH BUREAU PERSONNEL

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6/2/77

*sent to WPB
via fax 6/3/77
1:43 p.m. Jc*

*WPB
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