

FBI

Date: 1/19/69

Transmit the following in PLAIN TEXT  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via TELETYPE URGENT  
(Priority)

TO DIRECTOR 44 38861  
MEMPHIS 44 1987  
ATLANTA  
  
FROM PHILADELPHIA (44-1368)(P)

44-1368-510

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized ms  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed ms

MURKIN  
REMYTEL JAN. NINETEEN INSTANT.

REV. JAMES BEVEL, SCLC OFFICIAL IN PHILADELPHIA APPEARED ON WCAU TV SPECIAL NEWS INTERVIEW BETWEEN HALVES OF NFL ALL STAR FOOTBALL GAME TO STATE HE HAS EVIDENCE THAT JAMES EARL RAY DID NOT KILL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BEVEL REFUSED TO DIVULGE EVIDENCE TO INTERVIEWER BUT SAID HE HAD OFFERED TO DEFEND RAY IN COURT BECAUSE ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT A LICENSED ATTORNEY, HE WAS LEARNED IN THE LAW AND HAD SPENT MUCH TIME DEFENDING CASES IN COURT AND HAD PUT ALL THE FACTS TOGETHER TO SHOW RAY WAS NOT GUILTY.

BEVEL ALSO SAID ALL HIS FRIENDS DID NOT BELIEVE RAY WAS GUILTY.

HE SAID HE WAS SPEAKING FOR THE REV. RALPH ABERNATHY AND SCLC BUT THE PRESS INTERVIEWER SAID THAT AN OFFICIAL OF SCLC IN ATLANTA TOLD THE NEWS MEDIA THAT BEVEL WAS UNDER PRESSURE AND  
END PAGE ONE

JW/JJM  
(1)  
Approved: ms  
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 1-19-69  
AT 6:30  
ME 6:32  
WA 7:00 PM

Per CR

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

PAGE TWO

SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF ONLY.

BUREAU WILL BE KEPT ADVISED. LHM FOLLOWS.

END

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : SAC (44- )

FROM : ASAC ARNOLD C. LARSON

SUBJECT: REV. JAMES BEVEL  
MURKIN

DATE: 1/21/69

Section Chief CLEMENT L. MC GOWAN, JR., called at 10:10 a.m. this date and advised that captioned individual should be interviewed immediately.

He said that statements have been attributed to BEVEL that he has evidence that JAMES EARL RAY did not kill MARTIN LUTHER KING. The interview should develop complete details as to evidence or any information he has bearing upon the murder.

ACL:MMR  
(1)

*mmr*

*[Handwritten signature]*

44-1368-512

SEARCHED _____	INDEXED _____
SERIALIZED <i>mmr</i>	FILED <i>mmr</i>
JAN 21 1969	
FBI — PHILADELPHIA	



5010-108-01

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

FBI

Date: 1-21-69

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

To: SAC, Philadelphia (44-1368)

From: Director, FBI (44-38861)

MURKIN

RePHteletype to the Bureau dated 1-19-69.

This will be to confirm Bureau instructions given to you on January 21, 1969. You should immediately interview Reverend James Bevel, of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for complete details as to what evidence and information he may have bearing on the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

You should keep the Bureau advised of all pertinent developments.

1 - Memphis (44-1987)

44-1368-513

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 21 1969	
FBI - PHILADELPHIA	

*[Handwritten signature]*

Sent Via \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
January 21, 1969

JAMES EARL RAY;  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

Philadelphia news media on January 19, 1969, carried information that the Reverend JAMES BEVEL, Southern Christian Leadership Council of Philadelphia, Pa., sent a telegram to JAMES EARL RAY stating RAY did not kill Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING and BEVEL, who was present at KING's death, offered to testify in RAY's behalf.

On January 19, 1969, BEVEL appeared on WCAU-TV, Philadelphia, special news program during the half-time of the National Football League All-Star Game, stating that he had evidence that JAMES EARL RAY did not kill MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BEVEL refused to divulge his evidentiary information but offered to defend RAY in court though he (BEVEL) was not a licensed attorney, but was learned in the law and had had much experience in defending cases in the courts. BEVEL said he analyzed all the facts and concluded RAY was not guilty.

BEVEL said he was speaking for his friends in SCLC including the Reverend RALPH ABERNATHY.

The television interview said that an unnamed official of the SCLC in Atlanta, Ga., had told WCAU-TV that BEVEL has been under pressure and was speaking for himself, not SCLC.

The following is a verbatim tape transcription of the KYW Television news, 11 p.m., January 19, 1969:

Eleven o'clock report in color with BERT ROSELL and the eyewitness news team.

ROSELL: Good evening. There is a bizarre twist of events today in the case of JAMES EARL RAY. RAY is accused of killing Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., and goes on trial in Memphis, Tenn., March 3. The Reverend JAMES BEVEL is Director of Non-violent

44-1368-514  
Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_

JAMES EARL RAY;  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

Education and Direction Action for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). He was with KING when the civil rights leader was gunned down. BEVEL says that RAY is innocent and has offered to serve as RAY's attorney, free of charge. I talked to BEVEL this afternoon at his Philadelphia headquarters.

ROSELL: Reverend, how do you know that he is not guilty?

BEVEL: Well, in terms of gathering evidence, being present, studying the whole problem of men being murdered, how it is done, from all the logical conclusion and evidence that I have gathered my conclusion, based on the knowledge, in terms we built it to experience, knowledge to the sense that the five senses and even the sixth sense, my conclusion is that JAMES EARL RAY did not kill Dr. KING.

ROSELL: What evidence do you have to support your conclusions that JAMES EARL RAY is innocent?

BEVEL: Well, I would not like to get into my evidence and my information in terms of that because if he asks me to take the case, and I don't know whether he will or not, for me to give that information now would not be to his advantage.

ROSELL: Why have you held back this long in offering your services and proclaiming the innocence of JAMES EARL RAY?

BEVEL: Well, I don't know, probably because I have never (pause) I was involved in developing as I am now, because I was in a movement here in Philadelphia and I just haven't thought in terms of offering this free kind of service to him. When I started thinking about this particular predicament, then I thought about.....

JAMES EARL RAY;  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

The following is an interview of Reverend JAMES BEVEL by JAY SILVA, over television station WCAU, Philadelphia. This is the local CBS affiliate. The announcer was RON MILLER. The person interviewing BEVEL was JAY SILVA.

MILLER: Reverend JAMES BEVEL of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) says he will keep the evidence he has which he says would prove that JAMES EARL RAY did not assassinate Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, if RAY does not accept BEVEL's offer of legal representation. Reverend BEVEL sent a telegram to RAY yesterday offering to represent him in court without a fee. The telegram added, "I was present on April 4th at the Lorraine Motel when Dr. KING died. You have been accused of murdering him; of course, I know you aren't guilty." Today, newsman JAY SILVA asked Reverend BEVEL about the proof he says he has concerning RAY's innocence.

BEVEL: Number one, based on the evidence that I have in terms of the incident that took place and based on the opinion of all of my friends, I don't have a friend that I know that thinks that he did it. I thought (inaudible) that the man is not guilty and have come to my conclusions, and based on my evidence.

SILVA: What specifically is the evidence that leads you to this conclusion?

BEVEL: At this time, I don't want to tell about that because if I was going to defend him, you see, then I would have to present that information to the jury. So, I would not go into the details of my evidence at this time because I would have to deal with that with the jury.

SILVA: You say that you have specific evidence that shows JAMES EARL RAY was not the man who murdered MARTIN LUTHER KING.

BEVEL: Mhm.

SILVA: Then, do you have any idea who did, that shows JAMES EARL RAY was not the man who murdered MARTIN LUTHER KING?

JAMES EARL RAY;  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

BEVEL: Mhm.

SILVA: Well then, do you have any idea who did?

BEVEL: Now, I am not a district attorney. It is the responsibility of the district attorney to find out who killed people. And it is the responsibility of the defense attorney to prove that a particular person is not guilty. So that, in the way the courts work, it is never the responsibility of the defense attorney to prove who did kill someone. It is his job to defend the person who has been accused, that they are not guilty.

SILVA: You said you would defend JAMES EARL RAY without any fee. Are you a lawyer?

BEVEL: No, I am not a licensed lawyer. I have handled cases in court for the last few years. I have been in court quite a bit and I have handled most of my cases. The other thing is that I do know the law.

SILVA: The one thing that intrigues is, why have you held back this information for so long?

BEVEL: Well, number one, I hadn't thought about offering him my services. Now, the reason I, like I said, when you bind information together then you can come to conclusions. The first I said, he is not guilty. The next thing I said, he needs a good lawyer. He needs the best lawyer that the country can afford. And, of course, that means a lawyer who has knowledge enough in that situation and who knows the law. He needs a lawyer that can convince the jury that he is not guilty. And that's why I offered him my services, because I was interested in his having the best possible lawyer with the maximum amount of knowledge in law to defend him before the jury, because the jury and the country pretty much has resigned the motion that the man is guilty and they are just waiting to have a lynching party with him, you know. It is very difficult at this point considering the emotional attachment to Dr. KING that most people had, to have a fair trial.

SILVA: Do you speak for yourself on this issue?



JAMES EARL RAY;  
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM

BEVEL: For my friends? Ah, yes, my friends, RUTH BASCOMBE, BEVERLY ERIC, REVEREND SHEPPARD, DU BRADY, REVEREND ABERNATHY, MRS. ABERNATHY, MRS. KING, ANDY YOUNG.

SILVA: Do you say Reverend ABERNATHY agrees with you? You said your friends come to the same conclusion as you have.

BEVEL: I don't have any friends who ever told me that EARL RAY was guilty.

SILVA: So, inasfar as you know, Reverend ABERNATHY agrees with you.

BEVEL: Certainly, in terms of his position on him and I just talked to BERNARD LOVIER who is our Program Director and I pointed out that if RAY would give me the case, he would help me to do a lot of the research and defend him.

MILLER: In Atlanta, Georgia, a spokesman for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference said he, Reverend BEVEL, has been under a lot of pressure recently. Since Dr. KING's death he has gone into a deep depression and if he sent the telegram, he is speaking for himself.

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.

F B I

Date: 1/21/69

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL REGISTERED MAIL  
(Priority)

To: Director, FBI

ATTENTION:

From: SAC, PHILADELPHIA  
(44-1368)

CIVIL RIGHTS SECTION  
(C) GENERAL INVEST. DIV.  
 DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE DIV.

Subject: MURKIN

- CR     EL     VRA-65     CRA-64
- PA     PE     PF
- BM     BM-Threats     Racial Matters
- Klan     Organization

Summary of Complaint:

Remytels 1/19/69.

Enclosed for the Bureau are three copies of a self-explanatory LHM. Info copies furnished Memphis and Atlanta.

- 3 - Bureau (Enc. 3) (RM)
- 2 - Memphis (Enc. 2) (RM)
- 1 - Atlanta (Enc. 1) (RM)
- 2 - Philadelphia
- 1 - 44-1368
- 1 - 100-47194 (SCLC)

JRW/JBK  
(8)

*JBK*



Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_ *APC*  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_ *APC*

ACTION: UACB:

- No further action being taken and
  - LHM enclosed     Copy furnished to USA, EDPa.
  - LHM being submitted
  - Report being submitted
- Preliminary investigation instituted
- Limited investigation instituted

44-1368-515

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge

PH 44-1368

WF 1928-PRI advised 1/14/68 that Reverend JAMES BEVEL at an SCLC meeting recently held at Frogmore, S. C., wanted the Reverend RALPH ABERNATHY of SCLC to step down in favor of the Reverend JESSE JACKSON. WF 1928-PRI also said BEVEL was returning to Philadelphia to create a furor in the next four to six months.

FBI

Date: 1/21/69

Transmit the following in CODE  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via TELETYPE URGENT  
(Priority)

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861) AND ~~MEMPHIS (44-1987)~~  
FROM PHILADELPHIA (44-1368)

MURKIN

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_

RE MY TELETYPES DATED ONE NINETEEN SIXTYNINE AND ONE  
TWENTYONE SIXTYNINE.

44-1368-316

REVEREND JAMES BEVEL INTERVIEWED THIS DATE AT HIS RESIDENCE,  
NINE ONE NINE NORTH EIGHTEENTH STREET, PHILA., PA. AGENTS WAITED  
THIRTY MINUTES FOR BEVEL WHO WAS HOLDING A MEETING IN THE NEXT  
APARTMENT.

BEVEL STATED HE WAS EXTREMELY BUSY AS HE HAD APPOINTMENTS  
THROUGH ELEVEN PM, ONE TWENTYONE SIXTYNINE. BEVEL STATED THAT HE  
HAD PROOF OF THE INNOCENCE OF JAMES EARL RAY AND THAT SINCE THE FBI  
WAS THE PROSECUTOR AND HE WAS INVOLVED WITH THE DEFENSE, HE FELT  
HE SHOULD NOT FURNISH THE INFORMATION. \* FURTHER, BEVEL STATED HE  
SENT TELEGRAM TO RAY ON SATURDAY, JANUARY EIGHTEEN SIXTYNINE, AND  
AS YET HAS RECEIVED NO ANSWER. BEVEL STATED HE PLANS TO CALL  
PERCY FOREMAN, ~~FOREMAN~~ ATTORNEY FOR RAY, AND OFFER HIS SERVICES.

IT WAS POINTED OUT TO AGENT THAT THE FBI  
DID NOT PROSECUTE ARRESTS BUT ALWAYS MADE EVERY  
EFFORT TO OBTAIN ALL FACTS AVAILABLE.

BEVEL STATED HE WOULD TELEPHONE CONTACTING AGENTS ON ONE TWENTYTWO

1- Philadelphia (44-1368)  
EMC/kmd (1)

SENT BY 00010 TELETYPE

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge

Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M. Per \_\_\_\_\_

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)PAGE TWO  
PH 44-1368

*and advise*  
~~TO FURNISH INFORMATION~~ IF FOREMAN ACCEPTS HIS OFFER. IF FOREMAN DOES NOT ACCEPT HIS OFFER HE PLANS TO DROP ENTIRE MATTER AS HE FEELS HE HAS NO MORAL OBLIGATION TOWARD RAY TO PRODUCE HIS EVIDENCE OF RAY'S INNOCENCE IF HIS OFFER OF HELP WAS REFUSED.

BEVEL STATED HE WAS AT LORRAINE MOTEL ON THE GROUND UNDERNEATH BALCONY AT THE TIME KING WAS SHOT.

PH EIGHT NINE SEVEN R ADVISED TODAY HE SPOKE TO BEVEL WITH OTHERS CONCERNING BEVEL'S STATEMENT ON RAY'S INNOCENCE. DURING DISCUSSION WITH BEVEL IT WAS THE GENERAL FEELING OF THE MILITANTS THAT RAY WAS GUILTY AND BEVEL SHOULD EITHER FURNISH WHAT EVIDENCE HE HAS OR KEEP QUIET.

BEVEL TOLD THIS GROUP HE HAS NO EVIDENCE BUT THAT HE FEELS THE "SYSTEM" IS KILLING A MAN NOT WORTH ANYTHING WHILE THIS MAN KILLED A GREAT MAN.

BEVEL STATED THAT IF HE IS ALLOWED TO DEFEND RAY HE WILL BRING OUT EVERYTHING THAT THE "SYSTEM" DID TO CAUSE THE DEATH OF KING.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
 Special Agent in Charge

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)Via \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)PAGE THREE  
PH 44-1368

BEVEL ALSO STATED HE FEELS THIS IS A METHOLD TO REJUVENATE  
SCLC IN PHILA. AS SCLC HAS FALLEN OFF TO ALMOST NOTHING IN PHILA.  
IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BEVEL STATED HE IS TO RECEIVE A CHECK BY  
WESTERN UNION FROM SCLC, AELANTA, FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge

WA3 FBI PHILA

926PM 1-21-69 URGENT JLK

TO DIRECTOR 44-38861 (CODE)

FROM PHILADELPHIA 44-1368 3P

MURKIN

REMYTELS DATED ONE NINETEEN SIXTYNINE AND ONE TWENTYONE SIXTYNINE.  
REVEREND JAMES BEVEL INTERVIEWED THIS DATE AT HIS RESIDENCE,  
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OF THE INNOCENCE OF JAMES EARL RAY AND THAT SINCE THE FBI WAS THE  
PROSECUTOR AND HE WAS INVOLVED WITH THE DEFENSE, HE FELT HE SHOULD  
NOT FURNISH THE INFORMATION. IT WAS POINTED OUT TO BEVEL THAT THE FBI  
DID NOT PROSECUTE ANYONE BUT ALWAYS MADE EVERY EFFORT TO OBTAIN ALL  
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NO ANSWER. BEVEL STATED HE PLANS TO CALL PERCY FOREMAN, ATTORNEY FOR RAY  
END PAGE ONE

SENT BY CODED TELETYPE

*W. Miller*  
Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_ *mea*  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_ *mea*

*W*

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 21 1969	
FBI - PHILADELPHIA	

*44-1368-516*

PAGE TWO

PH 44-1368

TONIGHT, AND OFFER HIS SERVICES. BEVEL STATED HE WOULD TELEPHONE CONTACTING AGENTS ON ONE TWENTYTWO AND ADVISE IF FOREMAN ACCEPTS HIS OFFER. IF FOREMAN DOES NOT ACCEPT HIS OFFER HE PLANS TO DROP ENTIRE MATTER AS HE FEELS HE HAS NO MORAL OBLIGATION TOWARD RAY TO PRODUCE HIS EVIDENCE OF RAY'S INNOCENCE IF HIS OFFER OF HELP WAS REFUSED.

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END PAGE TWO



PAGE THREE

PH 44-1368

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IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BEVEL STATED HE IS TO RECEIVE A CHECK BY  
WESTERN UNION FROM SCLC, ATLANTA, FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS.

END

WA...EFH

FBI WASH DC

1-24-69

PLAIN TEXT

TELETYPE

URGENT

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861)

FROM MEMPHIS (44-1987)

MURKIN.

ON JAN. TWENTYFOUR, SIXTYNINE, ME THREE THREE EIGHT R ADVISED THAT JAMES BEVEL OF SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SCLC), ACCOMPANIED BY YOUNG MALE NEGRO, CEDRIC MOORE, FORMERLY OF MEMPHIS, NOW OF PHILADELPHIA, PA., ONE (FNU) RUTHERFORD, SCLC GENERAL MANAGER, AND (FNU) NIXON (PHONETIC), FORMER CAMPAIGN MANAGER OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY OF COMEDIAN DICK GREGORY, WERE IN MEMPHIS, TENN. ON NIGHT JANUARY TWENTYTHREE, SIXTYNINE. BEVEL CLAIMED TO HAVE CONFERRED FOR SEVERAL HOURS JANUARY TWENTYTHREE, SIXTYNINE, ON EIGHTH FLOOR OF PEABODY HOTEL WITH JAMES EARL RAY'S ATTORNEY, PERCY FOREMAN, AND LATER FOREMAN AND BEVEL CONFERRED WITH RAY IN SHELBY COUNTY JAIL. AT ABOUT TEN P.M., BEVEL CALLED PRESS CONFERENCE AT CLAYBORN TEMPLE AME CHURCH, AT WHICH HE INVITED DELEGATES TO NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MID-WINTER CONFERENCE, THEN MEETING IN MEMPHIS. BEVEL CLAIMED THAT HE WAS CONVINCED OF RAY'S INNOCENCE IN KILLING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CLAIMED AMERICA IS TRYING TO LYNCH RAY. CLAIMED SCLC

WHL:BN

CC (AM) 1 - PHILADELPHIA

1 - ATLANTA

1 - ME 170-70-Sub(ME 338-R)

1 - ME 157-166 (SCLC)

*meel*  
*1/24*  
*Dunbar*  
*W*  
44-1368-517

1-24-69

PAGE TWO

PRESIDENT, REV. RALPH ABERNATHY, IS ALSO CONVINCED OF RAY'S INNOCENCE. HE REFUSED TO FURNISH THE BASIS FOR HIS STATEMENTS, OTHER THAN TO CLAIM HE HAD "PROPHETIC POWERS." BEVEL ADDED THAT HIS CONVICTIONS REGARDING RAY'S INNOCENCE HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY HIM WITH ABERNATHY AND OTHER SCLC LEADERS AT A RECENT SCLC RETREAT IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND HE HAD CONVINCED THEM HE HAD PROOF OF RAY'S INNOCENCE, INDICATING THAT HE IS MAKING THESE CHARGES WITH ACQUIESCENCE OF SCLC LEADERS.

AIR MAIL COPIES TO ATLANTA AND PHILADELPHIA.

P.

END



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

January 23, 1969

JAMES EARL RAY;  
MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

Reverend James Bevel was interviewed at his residence, 919 North 18th Street, Philadelphia, Pa., on January 21, 1969. The following are the results of this interview:

GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM  
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE

DATE: 3/15/25  
BY: D85B74572

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

44-1368-518  
Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized mes  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed mes

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Date 1/23/69

Reverend JAMES BEVEL was interviewed for ten minutes at his residence. He stated he was extremely busy as he had appointments through 11:00 p.m. that day. While the interview was in progress, a woman asked BEVEL if he could speak to a member of the press. BEVEL told her to tell the person on the telephone he was tied up until 11:00 p.m.

BEVEL stated he had proof of the innocence of JAMES EARL RAY in connection with the murder of his good friend Reverend MARTIN LUTHER KING. BEVEL referred to KING as one of his closest and dearest friends. BEVEL stated that since the FBI was connected with the prosecution and he was involved with the defense, he felt he should not furnish this information.

It was pointed out to BEVEL that the FBI is an investigative agency and does not prosecute anyone. It was also pointed out to BEVEL that the FBI is as interested in proving a person's innocence as proving a person's guilt. BEVEL was advised the FBI was interested in obtaining and proving all facts possible during any investigation.

BEVEL stated he sent a telegram to RAY on Saturday, January 18, 1969, and as of the date of the interview, he had received no answer to his telegram. BEVEL stated in connection with this he planned to call PERCY FOREMAN, Attorney for RAY on the night of January 21, 1969, and offer his services in connection with RAY's defense.

BEVEL stated he would telephone the contacting agents on January 22, 1969, and advise if FOREMAN accepted his offer. BEVEL stated if FOREMAN does not accept his offer to aid the defense, he, BEVEL, plans to drop the entire matter as he feels he has no moral obligation towards RAY to produce his evidence of RAY's innocence if his offer of help is refused.

It was pointed out to BEVEL that if he had evidence of RAY's innocence, it should be brought to the attention of the court. BEVEL again stated he would do so only if he was allowed to be part of RAY's defense.

BEVEL stated that at the time MARTIN LUTHER KING

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

On 1/21/69 at Philadelphia, Pa. 2 File # Philadelphia 44-1368

by SA RALPH C. HAMNER and SA EDWARD M. COLE EMC:kpb Date dictated 1/22/69

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PH 44-1368

2

was shot at the Loraine Motel in Memphis, he was standing on the ground underneath the balcony where KING was shot.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

3

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

JAMES EARL RAY  
MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

On January 22, 1969, Special Agent Edward M. Cole telephonically attempted to contact Reverend Bevel at approximately 2:30 p.m. The person answering stated Reverend Bevel would not return until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.

On January 21, 1969, a source who has furnished reliable information in the past advised he with others spoke with Bevel concerning Bevel's statement on the innocence of James Earl Ray. This group, including the informant, are considered "militants" by Bevel. During the discussion with Bevel it was pointed out to Bevel that the general feeling of the militants is that Ray was guilty of shooting Reverend King and that Bevel should furnish what evidence he has or keep quiet.

Bevel told this group he has no evidence but that he feels the "system" is killing a man worth nothing while this man actually killed a greater man. Bevel stated that if he is allowed to defend Ray he, Bevel, will bring out everything that the "system" did to cause the death of King. Bevel also stated he feels this is a method to rejuvenate Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Philadelphia, as SCLC has fallen off to almost nothing in Philadelphia. In connection with this, Bevel stated he is to receive a check by Western Union from SCLC, Atlanta, for \$500.

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.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

4\*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

January 23, 1969

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Title JAMES EARL RAY;  
MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

Character

Reference Memorandum dated and captioned as  
above at Philadelphia, Pa.

All sources (except any listed below) whose identities  
are concealed in referenced communication have furnished reliable  
information in the past.

Declassified per Bureau  
routing slip 6086

07/23/77  
CAF

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.



F B I

Date: 1/23/69

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)  
FROM: SAC, PHILADELPHIA (44-1368)(P)  
SUBJECT: MURKIN

Re Philadelphia teletypes dated 1/19/69 and 1/21/69.

Enclosed herewith for the Bureau are 11 copies of an LHM titled as above.

Copies are being furnished locally to MI, NISO, OSI, Secret Service, and USA, EDPa.

One copy of this LHM is being forwarded Atlanta for information since Atlanta is OO in SCLC. Two copies are being furnished Memphis since Memphis is OO MURKIN.

This LHM is classified confidential to protect identity of PH 897-R since PH 897-R and one other individual were present when BEVEL made this statement. PH 897-R continues to furnish excellent information concerning racial and security matters.

Source utilized in the LHM is PH 897-R.

When interviewed on 1/21/69, agents had to wait 30 minutes for BEVEL because BEVEL was holding a meeting in the next room.

- 5 - Bureau (RM) (Encs. 11)
  - 3 - 44-38861
  - 1 - 100-438794 (SCLC)
  - 1 - 157-10808 (JAMES BEVEL)
- 1 - Atlanta (SCLC) (Info) (RM) (Enc. 1)
- 2 - Memphis (44-1987) (MURKIN) (RM) (Encs. 2)
- ⑤ - Philadelphia
  - ① - 44-1987 (MURKIN) 1368
  - 1 - 100-47194 (SCLC)
  - 1 - 157-1214 (RACIAL DISTURBANCES - MAJOR URBAN AREA)
  - 1 - 157-2979 (JAMES BEVEL)
  - 1 - 170-53 (PH 897-R)

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM  
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE

DATE: 3/15/85

BY: D85874572

44-1368-519

Searched \_\_\_\_\_

Serialized \_\_\_\_\_ *mcc*

Indexed \_\_\_\_\_

Classified by \_\_\_\_\_  
Exempt from GDS, Category - 2  
Date of Declassification Indefinite

6-9-77

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMC:kpb (13) Special Agent in Charge

*Kpb*

**CONFIDENTIAL**

PH 44-1368

For the information of Atlanta, BEVEL is currently employed at the Health and Welfare Council, Inc., 1428 Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa., telephone CE 2-9911.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 1/23/69

Reverend JAMES BEVEL was interviewed for ten minutes at his residence. He stated he was extremely busy as he had appointments through 11:00 p.m. that day. While the interview was in progress, a woman asked BEVEL if he could speak to a member of the press. BEVEL told her to tell the person on the telephone he was tied up until 11:00 p.m.

BEVEL stated he had proof of the innocence of JAMES EARL RAY in connection with the murder of his good friend Reverend MARTIN LUTHER KING. BEVEL referred to KING as one of his closest and dearest friends. BEVEL stated that since the FBI was connected with the prosecution and he was involved with the defense, he felt he should not furnish this information.

It was pointed out to BEVEL that the FBI is an investigative agency and does not prosecute anyone. It was also pointed out to BEVEL that the FBI is as interested in proving a person's innocence as proving a person's guilt. BEVEL was advised the FBI was interested in obtaining and proving all facts possible during any investigation.

BEVEL stated he sent a telegram to RAY on Saturday, January 18, 1969, and as of the date of the interview, he had received no answer to his telegram. BEVEL stated in connection with this he planned to call PERCY FOREMAN, Attorney for RAY on the night of January 21, 1969, and offer his services in connection with RAY's defense.

BEVEL stated he would telephone the contacting agents on January 22, 1969, and advise if FOREMAN accepted his offer. BEVEL stated if FOREMAN does not accept his offer to aid the defense, he, BEVEL, plans to drop the entire matter as he feels he has no moral obligation towards RAY to produce his evidence of RAY's innocence if his offer of help is refused.

It was pointed out to BEVEL that if he had evidence of RAY's innocence, it should be brought to the attention of the court. BEVEL again stated he would do so only if he was allowed to be part of RAY's defense.

BEVEL stated that at the time MARTIN LUTHER KING

On 1/21/69 at Philadelphia, Pa. File # Philadelphia 44-1368-520

by SA RALPH C. HAMNER and SA EDWARD M. COLE <sup>h</sup> <sub>W.C.</sub> EMC:kpb Date dictated 1/22/69

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.

PH 44-1368

was shot at the Loraine Motel in Memphis, he was standing on the ground underneath the balcony where KING was shot.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Rev. Bevel Plans Legal Fight To Defend Ray at His Trial

By CLAUDE LEWIS  
Of The Bulletin Staff

The Rev. James L. Bevel, of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said today he is "more convinced than ever" that James Earl Ray is innocent of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King.

Mr. Bevel, who visited Ray for an hour in the Shelby County Jail last week, said at a press conference here he intends to "seek justice" for the accused killer despite a ruling by Memphis Criminal Court Judge W. Preston Battle barring him from participation in the case.

Judge Battle ruled that according to Tennessee law, a defender not living in the state seeking to participate in a case in a Tennessee court must have a license to practice law from another bar association or the state Bar Association. In addition, Mr. Bevel, who is not a lawyer, would have to be presented to the bar by a practicing lawyer in Tennessee.

### Role Outlined

Mr. Bevel has often defended himself and other rights workers in southern courtrooms. The 32-year-old director of non-violent education and direct action for SCLC said that both Ray and his attorney, Percy Foreman, have requested that he join in Ray's defense "as an advocate, not as a witness."

Mr. Bevel, a Baptist minister, talked with Foreman for more than seven hours about the case. Afterward, according to him, Foreman informed Judge Battle that Mr. Bevel "is the most prepared legal mind with a substantial amount of evidence and the ability to be an advocate of the law of justice to represent Ray."

### Courts Rapped

Mr. Bevel charged that the courts of Tennessee are constitutionally illegal "because the U. S. Constitution guarantees the accused the right to choose his own counsel."

Mr. Bevel said he will attempt to get a license to defend Ray. If he is unsuccessful, he then plans to try to enjoin the courts from what he termed "their illegal activity."

"In any case," Mr. Bevel said, "before Ray goes to court in March, I do intend for him to have the counsel of his choice who is Rev. James Bevel."

Mr. Bevel who was a strong influence and close associate of Dr. King's, is an advocate of the philosophy of non-violence. He has stated that he did not come to the aid of Ray sooner because "I hadn't prepared to be responsive to him. But I thought 'here's a man sitting in jail who shouldn't be there. I couldn't be against him.'"

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

p.24-"The Evening  
Bulletin"  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Date: 1/28/69  
Edition: 2 star  
Author: Claude Lewis  
Editor: Wm. B. Dickinson  
Title:

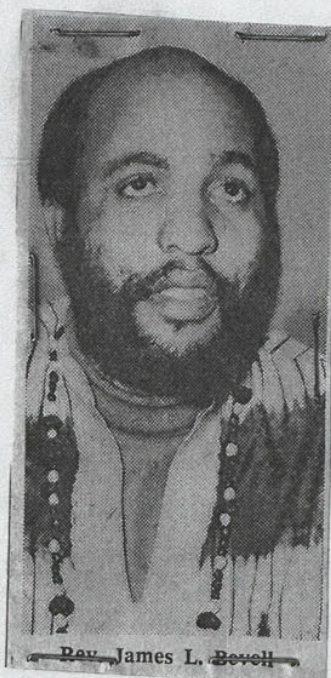
Character:  
or  
Classification:  
Submitting Office:  
PH  
 Being Investigated

44-1368-521

INDEXED  
JAN 28 1969

PHILADELPHIA

W



Rev. James L. Bevel

SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1897)

2/5/69

SAC, PHILADELPHIA (44-1368)

MURKIN - COST DATA

Re Memphis airtel 4/19/68.

Man Hours, Mileage, & Miscellaneous Expenses  
January 1969 - Philadelphia Division.

	<u>Regular Hours</u>	<u>VOT</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. SAs	25	15	40
Clerical	5	0	5
2. Mileage - 25			
3. Unusual Expense - None			
4. Two agents at peak.			



44-1368-522

2 - Memphis (44-1897)  
1 - Philadelphia (44-1368)

JRW:PSM  
(3)

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
S-i \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

2/5/69

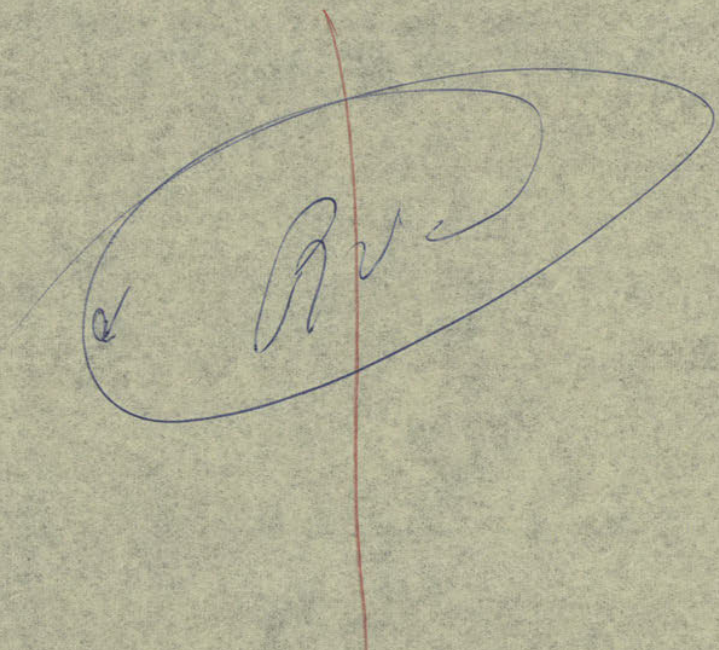
SAC, PHILADELPHIA (44-1368) (RUC)

MURKIN

Re Philadelphia airtel 1/23/69.

All information regarding the Reverend JAMES BEVEL, SCLC, and his statements regarding JAMES EARL RAY has been furnished the Bureau and Memphis.

Philadelphia is conducting no further investigation.



- 2 - Bureau (44-38861)
- 2 - Memphis (44-1897)
- 1 - Philadelphia (44-1368)

JRW:PSM  
(5)



44-1368-522A

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

**SUSPECT  
 ADMITS  
 SLAYING  
 DR. KING  
 Ray's Guilty Plea  
 Fails to Convince  
 Rev. James Bevel**

*(Pg 1, 2)*

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

p. 1, 3 - "The Philadelphia Tribune" Philadelphia, Pa.

Date: 3/11/69  
 Edition: Vol. 85, No. 34  
 Author: Lawrence H. Geller  
 Editor: E. Washington Rhodes  
 Title:

Character:  
 or  
 Classification:  
 Submitting Office: PH 44-1368-523  
 Being Investigated

SEARCHED INDEXED  
 SERIALIZED FILED  
 MAR 12 1969  
 FBI - PHILADELPHIA  
 WKS.

44-1368-523

# Conspiracy Hinted By Defendant; Gets 99-Year Jail Term

By LAWRENCE H. GELLER  
OF THE TRIBUNE STAFF

James Earl Ray, the accused assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. changed his plea from not guilty to guilty yesterday. Just a little more than 11 months after the tragic deed in Memphis, Tenn. which shocked millions around the world.

For his plea of guilty, Ray was

sentenced immediately to 99 years in prison.

However, while millions are ready to close book on the murder, an aide to Rev. James Bevel told the Tribune that "we still maintain the position that Ray is innocent."

## REV. BEVELL TO COMMENT

Just six weeks ago Ray is purported to have told Rev. Bevel he was innocent of murdering Dr. King, and Bevel believed him and agreed to defend Ray in Memphis.

Rev. Bevel will be back from Atlanta this week, said his aide, Cedric Moore, "and make a statement concerning the latest events in this case."

It's been widely interpreted that Ray's attorney agreed to a guilty plea in return for a 99-year sentence, rather than plead not guilty and take the chance that his client would get the death penalty.

"If Ray's attorney wants to play political games with the 'Establishment,'" said Moore, "that's his business."

Be that as it may, mystery still continues to surround this horrendous matter, and not all of it is being produced by the eloquent Rev. James Bevel.

## RAY ADDS TO MYSTERY

James Earl Ray added something to the mystery himself yesterday when he said, "I do not agree with my attorney that this was a one-man deed."

This statement, bound to confuse the millions watching this case very closely, does give some support to the conspiracy theory raised by Rev. Bevel a month ago.

Bevel charged that Ray was innocent and that "the killers of Dr. King were still walking around free."

The dynamic - speaking Bevel maintained that the five most fam-

ous political assassinations in this decade were all closely related. He referred to Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, the Kennedy brothers and Dr. King.

## ABERNATHY DIFFERED

While agreeing with Rev. Bevel's decision to defend Ray, Dr. Ralph Abernathy, president of SCLC, did not feel that Ray was innocent of the crime.

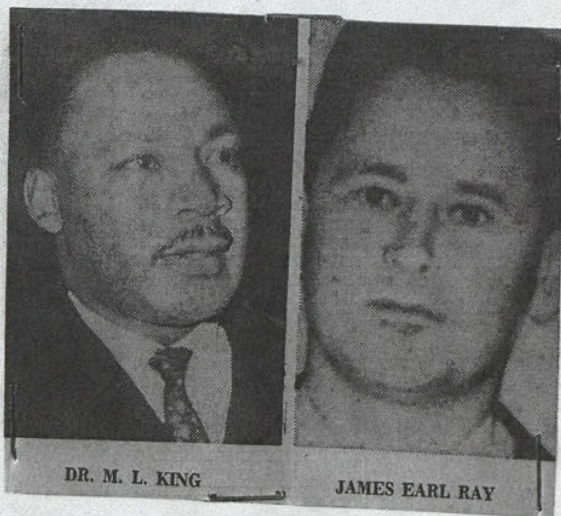
Dr. King was killed instantly last April 4th on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis as he was shot through the neck. Rev. Abernathy and Rev. Bevel were

at the time. Dr. King had returned to Memphis to lead striking garbage men on a march through downtown Memphis. The strikers were demanding higher wages and better working conditions.

The immediate aftermath of the assassination resulted in the largest funeral crowd ever to attend the burial of a public figure in this country. Close to 200,000 people walked through downtown Atlanta behind Dr. King's casket which was pulled by two mules.

A nation-wide manhunt went on for the murderer, and the finger was pointed toward James Earl Ray who was picked up by Scotland Yard in London two months after the assassination.

While millions will now go to sleep satisfied that justice has been done, others are still wondering whether the final chapter on the assassination of one of the world's greatest leaders has finally been written.



DR. M. L. KING

JAMES EARL RAY

**Charges Lack of Guard**  
Special to The New York Times

PHILADELPHIA, March 17—The Rev. James Bevel charged here today that police officials of Memphis had known about a plot to assassinate Dr. King but took no special precautions to guard him.

Mr. Bevel, director of non-violent education and direct action for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, insisted that "there definitely was a conspiracy" to murder Dr. King. He made the charges in an interview with Claude Lewis,

a reporter for The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.

Mr. Bevel said that the conference learned about the alleged plot a couple of days before Dr. King arrived in Memphis on April 3. He said the information came about as the result of a mistake made by Memphis postal authorities.

A letter addressed to a white woman was delivered to a Negro woman of the same name who lived in another section of Memphis, Mr. Bevel said. The letter, he added, contained "the relevant and pertinent information that Dr. King was to be assassinated while in Memphis."

Mr. Bevel said the letter was immediately turned over to the Memphis police, but no special security measures were placed around the Lorraine Motel, where Dr. King was slain.

44-1368-524

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>26</i>	FILED
MAR 21 1969	
FBI—PHILADELPHIA	

*Dunbar* *W*

3-20-69

AIRTEL

To: SACs, Memphis (44-1987) (Enc. 2) *h*  
Philadelphia (44-1368) (Enc. 2)

From: Director, FBI (44-38861)

MURKIN

Enclosed for Memphis and Philadelphia are two copies of an article which appeared in the "New York Times" on March 18, 1969, concerning statements made to the press by Reverend James Bevel, an official of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Philadelphia.

Memphis should review this article and determine through review of office files or inquiry at the Memphis Police Department if information exists to support or refute the statements of Bevel.

Memphis suLHM to Bureau and Philadelphia concerning all information developed relative to the newspaper article.

Copies of this communication and article are being provided to Philadelphia in the event it becomes necessary to interview Bevel at a later date. Philadelphia should not interview Bevel until so instructed by Bureau.

*[Handwritten signatures and initials]*

525

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 21 1969	
FBI—PHILADELPHIA	

*[Handwritten signature]*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Memphis, Tennessee  
March 21, 1969

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

An article appearing in the March 18, 1969, edition of the "New York Times," a daily newspaper published at New York, New York, contained an article datelined March 17, 1969, at Philadelphia, which states that Reverend James Bevel, identified in the article as Director of Non-Violent Education and Direct Action for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, has indicated that "there definitely was a conspiracy" to kill Dr. King. This article quotes Rev. Bevel as saying that as a result of a mistake made by Memphis Postal Authorities, a letter addressed to a white woman was delivered to a Negro woman of the same name who lived in another part of Memphis. This letter, he stated, contained the "relevant and pertinent information that Dr. King was to be assassinated while in Memphis." Rev. Bevel further states that this letter was immediately turned over to the Memphis Police but that no special security measures were placed around the Lorraine Motel, at which place Dr. King was killed.

On March 21, 1969, Inspector N. E. Zachary, Memphis Police Department, Memphis, Tennessee, who was in charge of the Homicide Bureau at the time Dr. King was killed, advised that he has never heard of such a letter and that at no time during his investigation of the King murder was it ever called to his attention that such a letter had ever existed.

On March 21, 1969, Inspector Don Smith, Memphis Police Department, Memphis, Tennessee, who was in charge of security arrangements for Dr. King's visit to Memphis on April 3, 1968, advised that when he met Dr. King and

44-3886-526

SEARCHED _____	INDEXED _____
SERIALIZED _____	FILED _____
MAR 24 1969	
FBI - PHILADELPHIA	

*Don Smith*  
*[Signature]*

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

his associates at the Memphis Airport on April 3, 1968, he inquired of Dr. King as to his plans for his stay in Memphis in order that necessary security measures might be put into effect. Inspector Smith said he was told by Rev. James Lawson, Pastor of the Centenary Methodist Church, Memphis, and who was one of Dr. King's associates, that Dr. King's plans had not been fully made and that he was unable to furnish Inspector Smith any information. Inspector Smith said that when Dr. King left the Memphis Airport, he (Inspector Smith) had no idea of the destination and that he "tagged along" to find out where they were going. He said that as soon as Dr. King arrived at the Lorraine Motel, he called for additional officers and had them posted in the vicinity of the Lorraine Motel.

Inspector Smith stated that he has never heard of a letter such as the one described by Rev. Bevel, and he doubts that such a letter ever existed.

On March 21, 1969, Mr. Louis Peele, Postal Inspector's Office, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that he has no information in his possession to indicate that such a letter as the one described by Rev. Bevel ever existed.

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.

3/21/69

AIRTEL

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

Enclosed for the Bureau are 4 copies and for Philadelphia 2 copies of an LHM pertaining to statements made by Rev. JAMES BEVEL, as reported in the March 18, 1969, edition of the "New York Times."

No further investigation is being conducted in this regard.

*Handwritten:* [Signature] 3-24-69

- 3 - Bureau (Encs. 4)
- ② - Philadelphia (Encs. 2)
- 1 - Memphis

JCH:jap  
(6)

Airtel \_\_\_\_\_  
 Teletype \_\_\_\_\_  
 A.M. \_\_\_\_\_  
 A.M.S.D. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spec. Del. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Reg. Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Registered \_\_\_\_\_

527

SEARCHED _____	INDEXED _____
SERIALIZED _____	FILED _____
MAR 24 1969	
FBI - PHILADELPHIA	

*Handwritten:* [Signature] IW



FBI

Date: March 26, 1969

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via Airtel \_\_\_\_\_  
(Priority)

TO: SAC, Philadelphia (44-1368)

✓ FROM: Director, FBI

MURKIN

ReBuairtel dated 3/20/69 and Memphis airtel to Bureau dated 3/21/69.

Philadelphia should immediately interview Reverend James Bevel, an official of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, for all information in his possession regarding his statement in the "New York Times" on 3/18/69 that a letter was turned over to the Memphis Police on approximately April 3, 1968, which contained information that Martin Luther King was to be assassinated while in Memphis.

This matter must be thoroughly resolved and Philadelphia should set forth appropriate leads based upon interview with Bevel.

Keep the Bureau fully advised of all developments.

1 - Memphis (44-1987) (info)

*Handwritten notes:*  
44-1368-528  
sub pb  
col  
cnc  
~~11~~

Sent Via \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_

WAS FBI PHILA

1130PM 3-27-69 URGENT JLK

TO DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE, ATLANTA, AND MEMPHIS (PLAINTEXT)

WFO VIA WASHINGTON

FROM PHILADELPHIA 44-1368

MURKIN

REBUAIRTEL THREE TWENTYSIX SIXTYNINE.

RETEL INSTRUCTED PHILA TO IMMEDIATELY INTERVIEW REVEREND JAMES BEVEL SCLC OFFICIAL CONCERNING HIS STATEMENT IN "NEW YORK TIMES" THAT LETTER WAS TURNED OVER TO MEMPHIS PD APPROXIMATELY FOUR THREE SIXTY-EIGHT CONTAINING INFORMATION THAT MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS TO BE ASSASSINATED WHILE IN MEMPHIS.

MEMPHIS PD KNOWS NOTHING OF LETTER.

BEVERLY STERNER, GIRL FRIEND OF BEVEL, TELEPHONICALLY ADVISED THIS DATE BEVEL WAS OUT OF TOWN AT A MEETING FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK. SHE STATED SHE WOULD ATTEMPT TO CALL BEVEL AND HAVE HIM CALL PHILA. SHE WAS TOLD FBI WOULD TALK TO HIM WHEREVER HE WAS LOCATED.

ATLANTA, MEMPHIS, AND WFO CONTACT SOURCES TO DETERMINE BEVEL'S LOCATION AND IF THERE IS ANY SCLC CONFERENCES.

44-1368-529

END

WA...JDR R RELAY

FBI WASH DC

*[Handwritten signature]*

*[Handwritten scribble]*

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Handwritten signature]*

Sent \_\_\_\_\_

11 19  
AT  
11 23 ME  
11 22 WA

Per \_\_\_\_\_

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 27 1969	
PHILADELPHIA	

FBI PHILA

FBI ATLANTA

1122PM URGENT 3/28/69 LWG

TO DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON FIELD, PHILADELPHIA  
FROM ATTANTA (44-2386)

MURKIN

RE PHILADELPHIA TEL MARCH TWENTYSEVEN LAST.

ATLANTA SOURCES CONTACTED THIS DATE AND ADVISED BEVEL  
IS NOT IN ATLANTA AND WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN TO THEM, ALTHOUGH  
SUPPOSED TO BE IN PHILADELPHIA WHERE HE RESIDES.

CONTACT BEING MAINTAINED WITH SOURCES AND IF LOCATED IN ATLANTA,  
WILL BE INTERVIEWED.

AM COPY TO MEMPHIS.

*44-1368-530*

END

CRR

FBI PHILA

*#9*

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 26 1969	
FBI PHILADELPHIA	

*Cole* *EXP*

INDEXED
FILED
MAR 28 1969
PHILADELPHIA

*Cole advised  
9:20 am  
3/29/69. KKS.*

PHILADELPHIA 07 833 PM JDR

URGENT 3-28-69 JDR

TO DIRECTOR, ATLANTA, MEMPHIS AND PHILADELPHIA (PLAINTEXT)  
FROM WASHINGTON FIELD (44-703) 1P

MURKIN.

RE PHILADELPHIA TEL MARCH TWENTY-SEVEN, LAST.

██████ || || ██████, R (PROB), (PROTECT) ADVISED MARCH  
TWENTY-EIGHT INSTANT THAT BEVEL NOT IN WDC. ACCORDING TO  
SOURCE BEVEL BELIEVED TO BE IN ATLANTA ATTENDING AN SCLC  
STAFF MEETING.

END

CRR

FBI PHILA

#9

SA Ed Caldwell  
32869-egN

44-1368-531

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>mt</i>	FILED <i>mt</i>
MAR 28 1969	
FBI PHILADELPHIA	

*Cole* *82W*

3-28-69

TELETYPE

URGENT

URGENT

3-28-69

BN

TO DIRECTOR (44-38861), WFO, ATLANTA, AND MOBILE  
FROM MEMPHIS (44-1987) 1 P  
MURKIN.

RE PHILADELPHIA TEL TO BUREAU MARCH TWENTYSEVEN LAST.  
FOR MOBILE'S INFORMATION, BUREAU HAS INSTRUCTED THAT  
REV. JAMES BEVEL, SCLC OFFICIAL, BE LOCATED AND INTERVIEWED CON-  
CERNING HIS STATEMENT IN NEW YORK TIMES THAT LETTER WAS TURNED  
OVER TO MEMPHIS PD APPROXIMATELY APRIL THREE, SIXTYEIGHT,  
CONTAINING INFORMATION THAT MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS TO BE KILLED  
WHILE IN MEMPHIS. MEMPHIS PD HAS NO KNOWLEDGE THIS LETTER.

BEVEL IS NOT NOW IN MEMPHIS BUT INFO AVAILABLE TO  
MEMPHIS INDICATES ABERNATHY OF SCLC IS TO BE IN ATLANTA MARCH  
TWENTYNINE NEXT AND ALSO THAT NUMEROUS SCLC OFFICIALS ARE TO  
MEET AT MONTGOMERY, ALA. ON APRIL FOUR NEXT.

ATLANTA AND MOBILE ATTEMPT TO LOCATE AND INTERVIEW  
BEVEL. P.

END

JCH:BN  
(2)

CC - 1 - PHILADELPHIA (AM)

44-1368-532

SEARCHED <i>mlh</i>	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED <i>mlh</i>
APR 1 1969	
FBI - PHILADELPHIA	
<i>Cole</i>	<i>Eric</i>

FBI PHILA

FBI CHICAGO

254PM DEFERRED 4-4-69 BCK

TO DIRECTOR, MEMPHIS, MOBILE, PHILADELPHIA,  
NEW YORK AND ATLANTA (44-2386)

FROM CHICAGO (44-1114) 1P

✓  
MURKIN

*x-ref 157-2574\**

RE ATLANTA TEL APRIL THREE LAST.

CONTACT WITH AVAILABLE SOURCES IN CHICAGO AREA FAILED  
TO REFLECT JAMES BEVEL PRESENTLY IN CHICAGO. INVESTIGATION  
CONTINUES.

END

SMW

FBI PHILA

P

44-1368-533

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>ml</i>	FILED <i>ml</i>
APR 4 1969	
FBI PHILADELPHIA	

*C* *1072*

FBI PHILA

5:48 PM URGENT 4/3/69 VSC

TO DIRECTOR 44-38861, CHICAGO, MEMPHIS, MOBILE, PHILADELPHIA AND  
NEW YORK  
FROM ATLANTA 44-2386

MURKIN

RE MEMPHIS TELETYPE TO BUREAU, MARCH TWENTYEIGHT, 'SIXTYNINE.

ON APR. TWO, 'SIXTYNINE, A T THIRTEEN EIGHTYSEVEN DASH R  
ADVISED DURING PRESENT WEEK THERE WAS RUMORED AMONG MEMBERS SOUTHERN  
CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE STAFF THAT JAMES BEVEL, DIRECTOR,  
NON-VIOLENT EDUCATION, SCLC, HAD RECENTLY COMMITTED HIMSELF TO A  
HOSPITAL IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A REST AND SEEK WHATEVER MEDICAL ATTEN-  
TION MAY BE NECESSARY. SOURCE UNABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS INFO  
OR PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS; HOWEVER, POINTED OUT MEMBERS OF SCLC  
STAFF FROM TIME TO TIME IN PAST HAVE EXPRESSED OPINION BEVEL'S ACTIONS  
SUGGEST HE IS IN NEED OF MEDICAL TREATMENT.

SOURCE HAS NO INFO BEVEL IS OR HAS RECENTLY BEEN IN ATLANTA.  
WILL REMAIN ALERT TO INFO INDICATING WHEREABOUTS.

IN VIEW OF FOREGOING INFO, IT IS SUGGESTED CHICAGO, NEW YORK  
AND PHILADELPHIA CONTACT SOURCES FOR INFO BEVEL MAY BE HOSPITALIZED  
IN ONE OF THOSE CITIES.

END

PH JLK

FBI PHILA

#9-

44-1368-534

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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APR 3 1969	
FBI PHILADELPHIA	
Cole	1522

FBI

Date: 4/8/69

Transmit the following in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL  
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)  
FROM: SAC, MOBILE (157-2627) (P)  
RE: MURKIN 157-2574\* - *H-reference*

Re Memphis teletype to the Bureau, 3/28/69.

Contact with available sources in Mobile Division, coverage of MARTIN LUTHER KING Memorial, 4/4-5/69, and demonstrations at Alabama State College, Montgomery, Ala., 3/29/69 to present, failed to reflect JAMES BEVEL presently in Mobile Div. Investigation continues.

- 3 - Bureau
  - 1 - Atlanta (Info)
  - 1 - Chicago (Info)
  - 1 - Memphis (Info)
  - 1 - New York (Info)
  - ① - Philadelphia (Info)
  - 2 - Mobile
- CG: crb  
(10)

*alle*

*44-1368-535*  
~~44-1368~~

SEARCHED <i>W</i>	INDEXED <i>W</i>
SERIALIZED <i>m</i>	FILED <i>h</i>
APR 10 1969	
FBI - PHILADELPHIA	
<i>crb</i>	<i>EMC</i>

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Sent \_\_\_\_\_ M Per \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Agent in Charge



WASHINGTON 11      NEW YORK 05  
440 PM URGENT 4-10-69 ECK  
TO DIRECTOR (44-38861) AND NEW YORK (CODE)  
FROM PHILADELPHIA (44-1368) 2P

MURKIN

RE BUREAU AIRTEL MARCH TWENTYSIX LAST, AND ATLANTA TEL  
APRIL THREE LAST.

REF AIRTEL INSTRUCTED PHILA TO INTERVIEW REV. JAMES  
BEVEL OF SCLC FOR INFORMATION IN HIS POSSESSION REGARDING HIS  
STATEMENT IN "THE NEW YORK TIMES" ON MARCH EIGHTEEN LAST,  
THAT A LETTER WAS TURNED OVER TO MEMPHIS POLICE ON  
APPROXIMATELY APRIL THREE, SIXTYEIGHT, WHICH CONTAINED INFORMATION  
THAT MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS TO BE ASSASSINATED.

REF ATLANTA TEL STATED RUMORS WERE THAT BEVEL HAD  
RECENTLY COMMITTED HIMSELF TO A HOSPITAL IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A  
REST AND SEEK WHATEVER MEDICAL ATTENTION MAY BE NECESSARY.

END PAGE ONE

**SENT BY CODED TELETYPE**

Searched \_\_\_\_\_  
Serialized \_\_\_\_\_ *mlh*  
Indexed \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_ *mlh*

*44-1368-536*

PH 44-1368

PAGE TWO

PH EIGHT NINE SEVEN - R ADVISED THIS DATE THAT HE HAD BEEN AT BEVEL'S APARTMENT AND AT SCLC HEADQUARTERS AND THAT ONE LOCAL OFFICIAL OF SCLC STATED BEVEL WAS IN NEW YORK BUT THAT SCLC WAS KEEPING QUIET. ALL OTHER SCLC PEOPLE ADVISED SIMPLY THAT BEVEL WAS OUT OF TOWN.

NEW YORK ATTEMPT TO LOCATE HOSPITAL AT WHICH BEVEL IS LOCATED BUT DO NOT INTERVIEW WITHOUT BUREAU PERMISSION.

IT IS FELT BEVEL SHOULD NOT BE INTERVIEWED IF HE IS IN A MENTAL HOSPITAL BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT TO THE BUREAU.

IF BEVEL IS LOCATED IN NEW YORK, THE FACT THAT HE IS IN A MENTAL HOSPITAL MAY BE EXCELLENT MATERIAL FOR COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE.

BUREAU IS REQUESTED TO ADVISE WHETHER OR NOT BEVEL IS TO BE INTERVIEWED IN HOSPITAL.

AIRMAIL COPY SENT ATLANTA AND MEMPHIS.

END

WA....JDR

FBI WASH DC

NY....JLW FBI NEW YORK