King [illegible] Memphis FBI Files

By [illegible] FELTMAN BLACK

[illegible] Department of [illegible] in Washington have [illegible] the FBI's files [illegible] phis in connection [illegible] new investigation [illegible] assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.

The investigators, [illegible] and Mike Shaheen of [illegible] Department's [illegible] professional [illegible] started seven weeks ago. It was announced by [illegible] Church's committee [illegible] Attorney General's [illegible] Washington [illegible]

Shaheen, 35, orig[illegible] Como, Miss., [illegible] former law clerk for U.S. D[illegible] Judge Robert M. M[illegible] was in town yesterday to [illegible] the Memphis probe under way.

He said his office "does nothing but investigate matters relating to allegations of wrongdoing — whether criminal or ethical — including all employes of the Department of Justice, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation."

Shaheen [illegible] five attorneys have been assigned to Memphis for two and [illegible] to three weeks "to go over all of the files — and they are extensive — in the Memphis FBI office in connection with the King assassination."

Then, he said files in all of the 59 field offices of the FBI also will be probed "as we understand there is material in all of the field offices concerning the assassination."

The first seven weeks of the probe, said Shaheen who plans to return to Memphis in a few years to set up a private law practice, have been spent poring over the FBI files in the Washington headquarters and the field office.

After all files are probed, Shaheen said investigators will return to Memphis to talk to all of the FBI agents here who were connected with the King investigation as well as all persons interviewed by the agents.

"This is going to be an exhaustive probe," he said. "We are going to look into everything in connection with the King assassination that the ordinary citizen could think should be looked into as well as much more. We will be tracing James Earl Ray's movements, looking into all conspiracies, theories and the like."

Shaheen, whose father he said is a "country doctor" in Como, said he has appointed Fred Folsom as head of the task force. "He is a veteran of the civil rights division, criminal division and criminal tax division in the department, said Shaheen. Folsom is in Memphis working on the task.

Shaheen said 10 persons are now assigned to the probe "and more will be added as needed. We have all the resources of the department at our command for a full scale, in-depth probe."

The probe will, said Shaheen, not only investigate "the FBI's investigation," but also concentrate on the assassination itself "because of what has now been described as 16 years of harrassment of Dr. King on the FBI's part."

So far, said Shaheen "nothing exciting," has been "turned up yet," but "we're finding a lot that is interesting."

Shaheen, who was elected mayor of Como when he was 29 and left to join the Justice Department three years ago, said he expects the overall probe to go on "for a few more months." Results, he said, will be reported directly to the Attorney General's office and the director of the FBI.

King was shot in Memphis on April 4, 1968. After an international manhunt, James Earl Ray was arrested and pleaded guilty on March 10, 1969, to the slaying. However, a few days after his guilty plea he claimed he was coerced into doing so by his attorney, Percy Foreman, [illegible]

[illegible] d by S[illegible] [illegible] plan to spend [illegible] looking at the case from [illegible] angle and to get rid of what appears to be the bureau's (FBI's) 15- or 16-year harassment of King, as disclosed by the [illegible] Department's [illegible] an unlimited [illegible] about 2½ to 3 weeks in Memphis and, eventually, across every King file in all 59 FBI field offices in the [illegible]

[illegible] turned up any[illegible] haven't noticed any[illegible] the bulk of the [illegible] be conducted in Mem[illegible] [illegible] at by ear," he [illegible]

[illegible] could possibly think [illegible] the Martin Luther [illegible] case [illegible] Earl Ray will be done before we [illegible]"