



# The King File

by Robert H. Reeder

SENATOR Frank Church (D.-Idaho) has turned the Senate Intelligence Committee into a vehicle for smearing the late F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover's private files show that he had become convinced that Martin Luther King was a person of low moral character who had fallen under the control of the Communists. Church claims to find this absurd. Attorney General Robert Kennedy, however, did *not* find it absurd in the least and authorized F.B.I. surveillance of King — including wiretaps, which were maintained between 1963 and 1966.

Those wiretaps and other evidence proved that Martin Luther King was indeed a person of low moral character who had fallen under the control of the Communists. But Senator Church has, like Richard Nixon, ducked the

issue by refusing to release the damning tapes. And the "Liberal" press has cooperated by laboring to create the myth that Martin Luther King was an innocent victim of Director Hoover's bad temper.

The F.B.I. has been accused of playing "dirty tricks" on Martin Luther King. It has been accused of threatening to release information in its files that would have been damaging to King's respectability. And almost nothing has been said about Martin Luther King's notorious immorality and Communist associates. The *New York Times*, on November 19, 1975, commented: "The committee staff members said they could find no justification for the bureau's attack on Dr. King." The Senate Intelligence Committee would like us to believe that Martin Luther King was under

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surveillance because he criticized the F.B.I.

We do not know what information is in the substantial F.B.I. file on Dr. King, but we do know that even the most cursory look at Martin Luther King's public record should convince the merest tyro that there was very good reason for Director Hoover to consider King "dangerous."

Martin Luther King was quoted in the *New York World Telegram* of July 23, 1964, as declaring: "[I am] sick and tired of people saying this movement has been infiltrated by Communists and Communist sympathizers. There are as many Communists in this freedom movement as there are Eskimos in Florida." One hardly has to look at the entire "freedom movement" to find evidence of Communist infiltration — though the level of infiltration was overwhelming when the whole movement is considered. Rather, to be scrupulously fair, let us look directly under Dr. King's nose — at those persons closest to him — and see what we find.

Hunter Pitts O'Dell came to work for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (S.C.L.C.) late in 1960 as Dr. King's staff consultant. In the fall of 1962 he was promoted to acting staff director in charge of voter registration and integration workshops. During this period, O'Dell was a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party. The "Liberal" press ignored it. Finally, on October 26, 1961, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* revealed that in 1956 and 1958

Hunter Pitts O'Dell had been identified under oath as a Communist organizer.

What did Martin Luther King do? He announced that he had discharged Comrade O'Dell.

A few months later it was discovered that O'Dell had not been fired but promoted, and was now running King's large New York office! When the story hit, Dr. King claimed to have discharged O'Dell a second time. A subsequent check by U.P.I. determined that Hunter Pitts O'Dell of the National Committee of the Communist Party was still employed by Dr. Martin Luther King.

Bayard Rustin is the notorious homosexual King called "a brilliant, efficient and dedicated organizer and one of the best and most persuasive interpreters of nonviolence." He was secretary and advisor to King from 1956 to 1960, and went with him to Oslo to receive the Nobel Prize in 1964.

Rustin was an organizer, recruiter, and fund-raiser for the Young Communist League, served 28 months in prison during World War II for refusing to do work required of those who were conscientious objectors, was given 60 days in jail in California for lewd vagrancy in 1953, and while working for King was one of only five "impartial observers" at the Communist Party's closed-door 16th national convention in 1957. That is only part of the record.

Fred Shuttlesworth, longtime field secretary of King's S.C.L.C., was

president of the Southern Conference Educational Fund (S.C.E.F.). This group was thoroughly investigated by Committees of both the House and Senate and repeatedly found to have been a major Communist operation. On November 26, 1963, Shuttlesworth was one of two honored guests at the 15th anniversary dinner of the *National Guardian*, described by a Congressional Committee as "a virtual official propaganda arm of Soviet Russia." A former bootlegger, Fred Shuttlesworth's Communist, Communist Front, and radical activities fill three typewritten pages. King said of Shuttlesworth: "Reverend Shuttlesworth is my principal aide. Why, he gave me my start and he advised me from the very first. I depend on him."

James Bevel was Martin Luther King's chief aide in Chicago. He has declared: "We must move to destroy Western Capitalism." At a Black Power rally at Berkeley, California, in 1966 Bevel announced: "One of the problems of not being able to burn down the slums of Chicago is at this point not having the proper discipline required for the problems of carrying out that kind of a mission. That is why we haven't burned it down . . . We are going to be part of an international revolution to end slavery . . . I guess I hate Western Civilization more than most people . . ."

The "Reverend" Bevel continued to emphasize the destruction of capitalism, and then he told the crowd that, when John Kennedy was President, Bevel had told people: "If the Vietcong

jumped Jackie in my back yard, I wouldn't pull them off her."

Wyatt T. Walker, staff aide to Martin Luther King, was editorial advisor to the Marxist-Leninist Progressive Labor Movement. He was a familiar supporter of Communist Fronts.

Myles Horton was director of the Highlander Center, an outgrowth of the Highlander Folk School, in Tennessee, where King was trained. Martin Luther King was in fact listed as a sponsor of the Highlander Center on its stationery. Horton conceived the Highlander Folk School, described by a Joint Committee of the Tennessee Legislature as "a meeting place for known Communists and fellow travelers." The Georgia Commission on Education termed it a "Communist Training School."

James Dombrowski was another member of the Communist Party who was a close friend and advisor to Martin Luther King. Law enforcement authorities obtained a cancelled check made out to King from the Communist Front S.C.E.F. which was signed by Dombrowski and Benjamin Smith. Smith, according to Senator James O. Eastland (D.-Mississippi), ". . . is registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act as an agent of Fidel Castro."

In a letter discovered by government investigators, King wrote to Comrade Dombrowski: "Dear Jim: This is just a note to acknowledge receipt of your letters of recent date. We, too, were more than happy to have you in our home, the fellowship was

very rewarding . . . . Very sincerely yours, Martin."

Carl and Anne Braden have both been longtime, notorious members of the Communist Party working in the Louisville area. The Bradens, officers of the S.C.E.F., were part of the "Louisville Seven" — a group responsible for purchasing a house in an all-white area of Louisville, selling it to a Negro family, and then dynamiting it to stir up racial trouble.

King wrote a letter to the Bradens in 1959 urging them to become permanently associated with his Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

A photograph taken at the 6th annual conference of the S.C.L.C. in 1962, and found in the files of James Dombrowski, shows Martin Luther King, Carl and Anne Braden, and James Dombrowski, and describes King on the back as "responding to Anne Braden's speech."

Aubrey Williams was president of S.C.E.F. until 1963. In 1945 the U.S. Senate rejected his appointment to a government post because of his affiliations with the Communist apparatus. In 1954, Williams was identified under oath as a member of the Communist Party by two witnesses.

Two years later, in 1957, King was photographed with Williams, Myles Horton, Abner Berry (a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party), and other Comrades at a Communist training school in Tennessee. King referred to Williams as "one of the noble personalities of our times."

Ralph David Abernathy was Mar-

tin Luther King's top aide from the time of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He succeeded King as head of the S.C.L.C. Abernathy accompanied Dr. King to that Communist training school in Tennessee in 1957. And they had more than their radical commitment in common. In the 1958 case of *Alabama v. Davis*, sworn testimony was introduced regarding sexual aberrations committed by Abernathy on a 15-year-old girl who sang in the choir of his church.

Not only is Abernathy an active supporter of such Communist causes as the effort to free Communist Angela Davis, but in 1972 he was an honored guest of the Soviet Union and of Communist East Germany (G.D.R.), where he declared: "As pastor and theologian, I am of the opinion that the G.D.R. embodies what we aspire to in the world." Two hours before his departure he told a Communist Party press conference: "What we are still fighting for in the U.S.A. is what has already been achieved in the G.D.R."

The East German Communists gave Abernathy a medal, and reported that agents of their leading religious Front had "for many years" been in correspondence with Martin Luther King. They presented the "Reverend" Abernathy with a German edition of Coretta Scott King's *My Life With Martin Luther King*, and he declared: "President Kennedy once said in West Berlin that he was a Berliner. I want to change that and say: 'I am a Citizen of the [Communist] German Democratic Republic.'"

LITTLE wonder that after lengthy investigation the Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities for the State of Louisiana concluded in its three-part Report on the activities of S.C.E.F. that the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, headed by Martin Luther King, was "substantially under the control of the Communist Party through the influence of the Southern Conference Educational Fund [S.C.E.F.] and the Communists who manage it."

If Martin Luther King was "sick and tired of people saying this movement has been infiltrated by Communists and Communist sympathizers," it was because he knew it was true.

And so did J. Edgar Hoover and the F.B.I. Director Hoover spoke out many times to warn of Communist involvement in the "civil rights" movement. On one occasion, he said: "We do know that Communist influence does exist in the Negro movement and it is this influence which is vitally important." Hoover declared that the Communist Party "strives only to exploit what are often legitimate Negro complaints and grievances for the advancement of Communist objectives . . . . Racial incidents are magnified and dramatized by Communists in an effort to generate racial tensions."

Mrs. Julia Brown is a brave and gracious Negro lady who spent more than nine years as a member of the Communist Party in Cleveland, serving as an undercover operative for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. According to Mrs. Brown:

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. . . Mr. King was one of the worst enemies my people ever had.

*I know that it is considered poor taste to speak ill of the dead. But when someone served the enemies of our country while alive, and his name is still used by his comrades to promote anti-American activities, shouldn't people who know the truth speak out?*

*I learned many surprising things while I served in the Communist Party for the FBI. Communist leaders told us about the demonstrations that would be started, the protest marches, the demands that would be made for massive federal intervention. Every Communist was ordered to help convince American Negroes that we are no better off than slaves. Wherever we went and whatever we did, we were to promote race consciousness and resentment, because the Communists know that the technique of divide and conquer really works.*

*We were also told to promote Martin Luther King, to unite Negroes and whites behind him, and to turn him into some sort of national hero. We were to look to King as the leader in this struggle, the Communists said, because he was on our side!*

*I know they were right, because while I was in the Communist Party I learned that Martin Luther King attended a Communist training school. I learned that several of his aides and assistants were Communists, that he received funds from Communists, and that he was taking directions from Communists.*

*Most Americans never look at the*

*Communist press in this country. If they did, they would learn that the Communists loved Martin Luther King. He was one of their biggest heroes. And I know for a fact the Communists would never have promoted him, financed him, and supported him if they couldn't trust him. He carried out their orders just as slavishly as Party members in Cleveland, Ohio.*

Little wonder that F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover called Martin Luther King "the most notorious liar in the country."

We do not know what additional information Mr. Hoover had on King, but after years of electronic surveillance he certainly knew much more than we have been able to present in this brief survey from the public record. Yet the Senate Intelligence Committee has refused to release the F.B.I. file on King. They chose instead to attack the F.B.I. for using "dirty tricks," and members of the Committee staff said "they could find no justification for the bureau's attack on Dr. King." Incredibly, a U.P.I. release on November 19, 1975, declared: "A top FBI official said Wednesday that the Bureau had no legal justification for its smear campaign against Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. but suspected, without evidence, he might be under 'Communist influence.'"

*"Suspected, without evidence.*

... "That is, as we have seen, simply not true. And the distortion is intended to damage the reputation of both the F.B.I. and the late Director J. Edgar Hoover."

John J. McDermott, Assistant Director of the F.B.I., spoke on November 21, 1975, before a Connecticut group which aids families of policemen, firemen, and corrections officers killed in the line of duty. He said the F.B.I.'s six-year surveillance of Martin Luther King was justified because of concern that King was influenced by subversives. He put it this way: "We did what we felt we had to do for the welfare of the nation at the time. Don't forget they [radicals and Communists] were bombing the Pentagon. They said they were going to shut down the government." Another F.B.I. official reminded us that the King projects "were started at a time when cities were being burned . . . ."

We believe most Americans would agree that our law enforcement authorities should keep under surveillance any person or group about which there is substantial evidence of involvement in such crimes as revolutionary violence, Communist subversion, and conspiracy with agents of a foreign power to overthrow the U.S. Government by force and violence. To the extent the F.B.I. maintained such surveillance under J. Edgar Hoover, we heartily applaud its efforts. ■ ■

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