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memo folder*

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*McGowan
McDougherty*

Mr. DeLoach

6/1/70

T. E. Bishop

**JIM BISHOP, AUTHOR;
PROPOSED BOOK ON MARTIN LUTHER KING**

You will recall that "Reader's Digest" has contracted with Jim Bishop, a well-known author, to do a book on the Martin Luther King assassination case. In contacts which Bishop has had with "Reader's Digest" concerning this matter, it was indicated that the book by Bishop would deal with the assassination of Martin Luther King and the hunt for, and apprehension of, the assassin by the FBI. Such a book, of course, would be most favorable to the FBI and our work in the case. We have not started working with Bishop in the preparation of the book because of the fact that James Earl Ray has filed a number of appeals in his case, conviction still being pending, and the Department has not yet authorized us to begin working with an author in connection with this case.

On May 21, 1970, by referral from Mr. DeLoach's Office, I received a phone call from Jim Bishop from Florida. He stated that he had recently had a conversation with Robert Cousins, an editor with Funk and Wagnalls, which is the publishing house for "Reader's Digest," about his proposed book on Martin Luther King. Cousins indicated that he had been led to believe by Hobart Lewis, President of "Reader's Digest," that Bishop had indicated an unwillingness to have his manuscript reviewed for accuracy upon its completion. Bishop advised me that he has always submitted his manuscripts for review to persons or agencies which have cooperated with him in the preparation of books and he would welcome such review by the Bureau in connection with any book he may do on Martin Luther King.

At this point, Bishop indicated in his conversation with me that what he has been considering in connection with the book regarding Martin Luther King is a biographical book on King which would end with King's death and the declaration of national days of mourning for King by the President. He indicated that he was extremely interested in getting all possible information concerning King from the FBI that he could, particularly that type of information which

*EL
WFC - C. B. BISHOP*

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Bishop
- 1 - Mr. M.A. Jones

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Bishop to DeLoach memo (continued)
Re: JIM BISHOP, AUTHOR

would show King's immoral character, the influence over him by subversive elements, etc. He indicated that he was considering keeping his book strictly one of a biographical nature rather than one which would deal with the details of King's assassination and the Bureau's hunt for the killer and the apprehension of the latter.

On June 1, 1970, you (Mr. DeLoach) telephonically contacted Bishop and advised him in no uncertain terms that it would not be possible for the Bureau to furnish him any information whatsoever concerning King's immoral character or his communist or subversive connections. He was advised that this information was classified and had never been released by the FBI to any source outside of the Government. He was told that, if and when we get clearance from the Department to do so, we would be willing to cooperate with him in a book which would treat solely with the assassination and the events leading up to the identity and capture of James Earl Ray, the assassin.

Bishop advised you (Mr. DeLoach) that he had apparently been under a misapprehension as to the type of book which "Reader's Digest" expected him to write on Martin Luther King. He stated that he would be favorably disposed toward doing a book dealing with the assassination of King, but he wished to discuss the matter further with "Reader's Digest."

Inasmuch as we have not yet received clearance from the Department to cooperate in the preparation of a book on the assassination of King, no further action will be taken on this matter until such clearance is received and until we are assured by Bishop that his book will treat with the assassination of King rather than being a biography of him attempting to expose his immoral character and communist connections.

RECOMMENDATION:

No additional action is recommended until we have received clearance from the Department on this matter.