

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date December 19, 1968

RAYMOND LEE RUSSELL, SR., Georgia State Prison (GSP), [redacted] was contacted in the Visitors' Section of the prison, just off the rotunda, GSP. RUSSELL was advised that he was to be interviewed in regard to a letter that had been received by Mrs. DONNELLY, 2731 North Sheffield, Chicago, Illinois, from "RAY RUSSELL", [redacted] Reidsville, Ga."

RUSSELL was given a rights and waiver form which he executed by signing it.

RUSSELL stated he did not desire to furnish a signed statement, however, he provided the following information orally:

In November, 1968, he read an article in Look Magazine. An issue of Look Magazine dated November 12, 1968, was displayed to RUSSELL, which had an article entitled "The Story of James Earl Ray and the Plot to Assassinate Martin Luther King" by WILLIAM BRADFORD HUIE.

He especially took note of the part of the article in Look Magazine in which there was a reference to a rooming house located at 2731 North Sheffield, Chicago, Illinois, owned by a Mrs. DONNELLY. He recalled that several years ago while he was in jail he wrote a letter to a woman whose name and address had appeared in a newspaper article telling of the death of her son. On that occasion he told the woman that he had known her son and that her son had owed him (RUSSELL) \$200.00. As a result of this letter the woman had sent him \$200.00 to repay the alleged debt, when actually he was only playing on the sympathy of the woman and the memory of her son.

He is searching, at all times, for ways to play on the sympathy of other persons and when he read the article in Look Magazine, he immediately felt that here was a woman, Mrs. DONNELLY, who seemed to be ideal for the purpose of sending a request for money. The story had even given Mrs. DONNELLY's home address.

On 12/11/68 at Tattnall County, Georgia File # Savannah 44-1768
by SA SYDNEY J. SMITH/ine Date dictated 12/17/68

He desired to get a radio and some money so when he read the JAMES EARL RAY story, he immediately thought of the scheme or plan to get the radio or some money from Mrs. DONNELLY. He had hoped that Mrs. DONNELLY would send him the radio and the money without notifying anyone. He was actually trying to "con" Mrs. DONNELLY out of the radio and money. He then wrote a letter to Mrs. DONNELLY, 2731 North Sheffield, Chicago, Illinois, in which he related that he had stayed in the back basement room and that he had left a radio in the room. He also related in the letter that it was a good radio and that he needed it so much. He also wrote that if Mrs. DONNELLY could not find the radio then he wanted her to get him one. He also related in the letter that he wanted Mrs. DONNELLY to help him get \$169.00 so that his lawyer could help him. He also wrote that he had some money but did not trust his lawyer and that he would tell her (Mrs. DONNELLY) where to go and pick up the money. In the letter he had written to Mrs. DONNELLY he had also mentioned the name, JOHN LARRY RAYNS, which name he had also obtained from the Look Magazine article.

He had never known JAMES EARL RAY, either by the name JAMES EARL RAY or JOHN LARRY RAYNS or any other name. He had never met RAY. He had never talked with anyone who knew RAY. He had never been in Chicago, Illinois, and had never lived at 2731 North Sheffield, Chicago, Illinois. He had never known Mrs. DONNELLY or even met her.

He is not involved and never has been involved in any conspiracy with any other individuals in a plot to kill MARTIN LUTHER KING.

He never told anyone about writing the letter to Mrs. DONNELLY and wrote the letter solely to "con" a radio or money out of Mrs. DONNELLY.

A description of RUSSELL as obtained by observation and interrogation is as follows:

Name	RAYMOND LEE RUSSELL, SR.
Also Known As	Raymond Russell Ray Russell

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Race	Negro
Sex	Male
Age	36 years
DOB	September 11, 1932
POB	Atlanta, Georgia
Height	5'7"
Weight	163 pounds
Build	Medium stocky
Hair	Black
Eyes	Brown
Complexion	Dark
Military Service	None
Social Security Account Number	Unknown
Wife	BERTHA RUSSELL, nee Thomkins 1156 Sampson, Apt. #7 Atlanta, Ga. Telephone 758-7852
Children	Two RAYMOND LEE RUSSELL, JR., 6 years old JUANITA DENISE RUSSELL, 4 years old
Scars	1" scar at corner of left eye; $\frac{1}{4}$ " dent scar on end of nose; burn scar on calf of left leg; burn scar on left hip
Other	Gold crown on upper right tooth; one tooth missing in lower front
Received Sentence	1964