

KING'S ROLE IS QUIET, INTENSE As FBI Searches for Clues

By Gaylord Shaw

MEMPHIS, April 13 (AP)—In the 10 days since the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the lights have burned all night, night after night, in a corner suite on the eighth floor of Memphis' new Federal building.

There, in offices overlooking the wide, muddy Mississippi River, dozens of FBI agents have methodically sifted through what is described as "very substantial" physical evidence.

Exactly what constitutes this evidence is officially unknown, but sources report some of the major items are palm and finger prints, an overnight bag believed to contain clothing and a high-powered rifle with a telescopic sight.

In addition, a white Mustang similar to one that reportedly sped from the assassination scene has been impounded in Atlanta. It has

been linked to an Eric Starvo Galt, described as an unemployed merchant seaman who lived in Birmingham until three months ago. The FBI refuses to say why it is looking for Galt.

Robert Jensen, 52, special agent in charge of the Memphis office, wore a strained smile as he faced reporters. "All I can say is no comment," he repeated to all questions.

Jensen wouldn't even say how many agents have been sent into Memphis. But in a five-minute period late one night, reporters watched 15 agents hurry in or out of the suite through an unmarked side door.

FBI agents have interviewed hundreds of persons in Memphis, Birmingham, Atlanta and elsewhere. They have taken over the records of two rooming houses and at least one gun shop in Birmingham. They have poured through documents in state and local

government offices throughout the South.

(Washington Post Staff Writer Paul Valentine reported from Atlanta that more than 100 FBI agents are working on the case in that city alone.)

It seems that everywhere reporters go, the FBI already has instructed them to say nothing.

Across the street from the FBI office, spokesmen for the Memphis police insist their department still is working closely with Federal agents. But from all indication, the FBI has taken over the investigation completely.

The FBI has maintained silence on all aspects of the investigation. But Attorney General Ramsey Clark issued a new statement in Washington last night that dropped his earlier reference to "one man on the run."

Sixteen hours after Dr. King was slain April 4, Clark said evidence "indicates a single individual" was involved. "There is no evidence of a widespread plot," he said.

In the seven-line statement last night, Clark said the FBI was devoting all its resources to the investigation, "working around the clock pursuing every lead."

This could mean that investigators are re-examining the possibility that more than one person was involved in the assassination.

They seemed puzzled about conflicting reports on the number of getaway cars involved and about police radio transmissions detailing a high-speed chase—which apparently never took place—through northeast Memphis 30 minutes after a sniper killed Dr. King with a single rifle shot.

One member of Congress has criticized the FBI's procedure. Noting what he called discrepancies throughout investigation, Rep. Charles Whelan Jr., (R-Ohio), said FBI should "set the record straight."

"The handling of the investigation and the efforts to apprehend the guilty persons hardly had been ensuring to a tense and troubled Nation," Whelan said in Washington.

But a Justice Department spokesman noted that it takes 12 days to make an arrest. The 1963 slaying of civil rights leader Medgar Evers in Mississippi and more than 100 months to make arrests in 1964 murders of three rights workers in the state.

[UPI reported from Atlanta that the FBI has decided to present that the Knights of the Ku Klux—accused in the past of murders in Mississippi—had part in the King assassination. The conclusion was reached after 500 members of the infiltrated Klan were checked for their whereabouts on the day of the slaying. During a four day check, a source in the state of Mississippi turned upside down.]

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