

FBI

Date: 3-18-69

Mr. Tolson	
Mr. DeLoach	
Mr. Mohr	
Mr. Bishop	
Mr. Casper	
Mr. Callahan	
Mr. Conrad	
Mr. Felt	
Mr. Gale	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Sullivan	
Mr. Tavel	
Mr. Trotter	
Tele. Room	
Miss Holmes	
Miss Gandy	

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AM
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) P
MURKIN

There are enclosed two copies of report of Captain RICHARD M. DAWSON, one of the officers who accompanied RAY during his transfer from custody of the Sheriff's Department, Memphis, to the Tennessee State Prison, Nashville.

3 BUREAU (Enc. 2) (AM)
1 MEMPHIS

RGJ:BN
(4)

EX 104

MAR 20 1969

5648

Approved: _____

R. L. ...

Sent _____

M

Per _____

66 MAR 20 1969

Special Agent in Charge

Statement of RICHARD M. DAWSON, Captain of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, station at Jackson, Tennessee. Made in the Attorney General's Office at 11:40 A.M. on Tuesday, March 10, 1969. Questioned by John L. Carlisle. Typed by Mrs. Loretta Bender.

* * * * *

Relative to the JAMES EARL RAY case.

* * * * *

Q. Captain Dawson, on the morning of March 11, 1969, did you, and other officers of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, accompany James Earl Ray to the State Penitentiary at Nashville?

A. Yes sir, I did.

Q. Would you name the officers that accompanied you and relate any discussion as you can recall between Ray and any of the officers.

A. Yes sir. We assumed custody of Ray at approximately 5:20 A.M. in the Highway Patrol Station on Summer Avenue, Memphis. He was placed in the rear seat of the automobile. I sat on his left. Commissioner O'Rear was on his right. Inspector Mickle McGuire drove. Deputy Commissioner Bud Hopton sat in the front on the right. I recall some...for the first 15-20 minutes, there was very little conversation. As we continued on, Ray made some remarks concerning the landscape and scenery. I remember asking Ray that yesterday was his birthday and he looked like he had celebrated it with a bang. He said, hell, yesterday wasn't my birthday. I've lied to them so much they don't know when I was born...or words to that effect. I remember Inspector McGuire asking Ray then if the articles in Look Magazine pertaining to his case were in fact truth. Ray responded...hell no, about 90% of it is lies and Huie now knows about the time that I was in a mental institution and I understand that his next article is going to say that I'm crazy. I also remember McGuire asking Ray if he had been in Nashville before. Ray said that is where the Grand Jury...

made that one of them, we understood, was in the name of a police officer and he laughed heartily, but he didn't say anything. He made no reference to the crime itself. He did ask me if he would be placed in a cell or he allowed to be out on some and he was told that he should take this up with the warden of the institution. He indicated that he sure hoped they would not lock him in a cell. I recall that he said he had sure messed up and if it was to do over, he would not have pleaded guilty to the offense. We arrived at the Penitentiary at 8:05 and Ray was released to the prison authorities.

Q. That's all, thank you.

RICHARD M. DAWSON