

FBI

Date: 1/18/77

Transmit the following in _____

(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL

(Precedence)

176/121

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987 SUB M) (P)

SUBJECT: MURKIN
CR
OO: MEMPHIS

Handwritten signature/initials

Re Birmingham airtel with enclosed LHM, 12/15/76.

Enclosed for the Bureau are four copies and for Birmingham one copy of an LHM dated 1/18/77 captioned "JAMES EARL RAY; MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM, CR."

The source referred to in the enclosed LHM is [redacted] (protect) who furnished this information to the Birmingham Office. BH 1079-PC1 sec 12/15/76 12/22/76 BA [redacted]

A review of indices of the Memphis Office reveals that FREDERICK LEE SHUTTLEWORTH was formerly affiliated with the Southern Conference Educational Fund. It is not known by the Memphis Division whether FREDERICK LEE SHUTTLEWORTH is the individual referred to in the Birmingham LHM.

For the information of the Bureau, in 1971 the Birmingham Office requested the Memphis Office to determine the subscriber to a telephone number relating to an investigation being conducted by Birmingham regarding Dr. GUS JOSEPH PROSCH, JR. Memphis determined that this telephone

- 2-Bureau (Enc. 4)
- 1-Birmingham (Enc. 1) source (44-1740)
- 2-Memphis The CONFIDENTIAL

ENCLOSURE ST-105

REC-2

44 38 61-6176

BFJ:rsb advised on 5/31/77 that he can be identified to the HSCA as the source of the information provided see BH Teletype 5/3/77 and BH airtel 6/1/77.

Attended made available to OPR Task Force Attorney Joseph Gross, Wm. White, and James Kieckhefer for review on 1/25/77. Gross returned attached, requested on 1/25/77 and by [redacted] request.

Approved: *[Signature]*

Special Agent in Charge

Sent

M

Per

84 FEB 8 1977

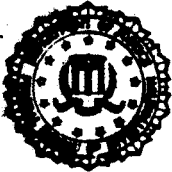
1-25-77
HNH jdp
See file copy

6176

ME 44-1987 SUB M

number was listed to J. E. BUNT, 2597 Tutwiler, Memphis, Tennessee.

On 3/4/71 Lt. E. H. ARKIN, Intelligence Division, Memphis PD, advised that BUNT was arrested for violation of the Memphis City Curfew Law during the riots which ensued after the assassination of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. The Memphis Office has no information indicating the relationship between Dr. PROSCH and BUNT.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Memphis, Tennessee
January 18, 1977

RE: JAMES EARL RAY;
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. -
VICTIM
CIVIL RIGHTS

On December 14, 1976, a source who has furnished insufficient information to establish his reliability, advised that Dr. Gus Prosch, who often introduced himself as John Willard, Frank Liberto, who source learned owned an unnamed truck stop on Lake Pontchartrain in New Orleans, Louisiana, and whom Prosch described as the head of the Greek Mafia in New Orleans, Reverend (first name unknown) Shuttleworth, personally known to the source in 1968 as very active in civil rights matters, Dr. Ralph Abernathy, and a Mr. (first name unknown) Gault met a number of times in the Birmingham, Alabama, area in 1968. Following one of the meetings, Dr. Prosch informed the source that Dr. Abernathy and Reverend Shuttleworth had bought a contract for \$265,000 to have Martin Luther King, Jr. killed.

On November 29, 1970, the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Birmingham, Alabama, received a report that a trailer loaded with guns was bogged down at Parkwood Trailer Park, Parkwood Community, in Jefferson County near Bessemer, Alabama. This trailer, whose ownership was subsequently traced to Prosch, was found to contain a huge quantity of shoulder and hand firearms, ammunition of various caliber, hand grenades, dynamite, sawed off shotguns, a 60 mm mortar, black powder, capped bottles containing gas, bayonets, food stuff, camping equipment, medical supplies, and other unnamed materials. Some of the weapons in this cache were traced to Dr. Prosch, a Birmingham physician whose practice was limited to treating overweight persons. Dr. Prosch, a white male,

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born November 17, 1930, at Birmingham, Alabama, then resided at 2640 Paden Place, Jefferson County, Alabama, and maintained an office at 2154 Highland Avenue South, Birmingham.

On April 6, 1968, John McFerren, Somerville, Tennessee, furnished the following information:

On the afternoon of April 4, 1968, McFerren traveled from Somerville, Tennessee, to Memphis, Tennessee, to pick up supplies for his grocery store. While in Memphis he went to the place where he normally bought his produce which he said was possibly the L L & L Produce Market, 814 Scott Street. According to McFerren, this business was operated by a heavy set white man, who weighed approximately 300 pounds, who appeared to be possibly of Puerto Rican extraction. After McFerren arrived at this company he walked up to the door of the office and noticed that the heavy set man was sitting at his desk with his back to the door and talking on the telephone. McFerren stated he heard this heavy set man say "kill the S.O.B. on the balcony and get the job done. You will get your \$5,000."

McFerren reported that he went back to the rear portion of this office and shortly thereafter heard the telephone ring. The phone was answered by a white man, thin in build, who had a scar on his right cheek. McFerren could not hear what this man said when he answered the phone, but after answering the phone, he handed it to the heavy set man. McFerren heard the heavy set man say "Don't come out here. Go to New Orleans and get your money. You know my brother."

McFerren reported that approximately a week prior to April 4, 1968, he was at the L L & L Produce Market, at which time the heavy set man, the man with the scar, and approximately three other white males were

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in a group talking. He heard the heavy set man say at this time, "they ought to shoot the S.O.B." Immediately after making this statement, the heavy set man walked over to McFerren and said "what do you think about King and his mess?" McFerren reported that he told the heavy set man that he tended to his own business.

On April 19, 1968, Frank Camilla Liberto, who resided at 3271 Powers Street, Memphis, Tennessee, and was employed as President of L L & L Produce Company, 814 Scott Street, Memphis, furnished the following information:

To the best of his knowledge, he was at his place of business on April 4, 1968. Liberto emphatically denied having any knowledge of the identity of the person responsible for the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968. He emphatically denied ever discussing with anyone the possibility of shooting King, although he admitted he had made the usual derogatory remarks about King's actions in Memphis, Tennessee, and also made remarks about the fact King was partly responsible for the curfew imposed on the city of Memphis resulting in loss of revenue by his business establishment in the Memphis area. He acknowledged he may have made statements to the effect that King should be killed, although he does not recall any specific statements made by him to this effect. He stated that due to the curfew, he suffered approximately \$40,000 in loss sales at the produce company.

Liberto stated he frequently made trips to New Orleans, Louisiana, to purchase produce, and also because members of his family resided in the New Orleans area. Most of his co-workers, employees, and customers at the produce company, knew of his travels to New Orleans.

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Liberto specifically denied making or receiving any telephone calls on April 4, 1968, wherein there was conversation regarding Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or the shooting of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He pointed out that most of his business transactions are made through use of the telephone and that these conversations frequently result in talking about large sums of money. He stated that he would have no reason for becoming involved in any action directed at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He stated he frequently taunted various individuals regarding racial matters and may have made disparaging remarks to some of his customers involving King, but did not consider this uncommon among various co-workers at his place of business.

Liberto advised that the following members of his family reside in New Orleans, Louisiana:

- 1 - Emily Liberto, mother, 2219 Altomaster Street;
- 2 - Tony Liberto, brother, residing two houses down from his mother, specific address not known;
- 3 - Vincent Liberto, brother, who worked for the Viking Truck Company, New Orleans;
- 4 - Salvadore Liberto, brother, who worked as a truck driver for West Brothers in New Orleans.

The following description of Liberto was obtained through observation and interview:

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| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Race | White |
| Sex | Male |
| Date of Birth | January 7, 1917 |
| Place of Birth | Memphis, Tennessee |
| Height | 5'10-11" |
| Weight | 285 pounds |
| Eyes | Grayish blue |
| Hair | Brown |

On April 4, 1968, Reverend Ralph David Abernathy, 690 LaVerne Drive, Northwest, Atlanta, Georgia, was interviewed at the Memphis Police Department, Memphis, Tennessee, and furnished the following information:

Reverend Abernathy described himself as Vice President at large and Treasurer of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He stated he was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s closest associate and that he and Dr. King always shared a room whenever they traveled together.

At about 10:30 a.m. on April 3, 1968, Reverend Abernathy and Dr. King registered at the Lorraine Motel, Memphis, Tennessee. On April 4, 1968, he and Dr. King did not leave the motel and spent most of the day at their room, number 306, which was located on the second floor of the motel. Reverend Abernathy and Dr. King had been away from their room for approximately one hour or less when they returned to the room at 5:30 p.m. They dressed because they were going to dinner at the home of Reverend Billy Kyle and at almost exactly 6:00 p.m., started to leave the room. Reverend Abernathy stopped for a moment and Dr. King walked out onto the balcony just outside the door to their room. Reverend Abernathy stated he heard what sounded like a firecracker and heard the screams of persons to whom Dr. King had been talking. Reverend Abernathy went to the balcony and observed Dr. King lying there wounded in the right side of the face and neck. He instructed someone to call an ambulance and accompanied Dr. King in the ambulance to the hospital where Dr. King died.

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Reverend Abernathy reported that while he and Dr. King were in the motel room, Dr. King did not, to his knowledge, receive any telephone calls of a threatening nature or calls from persons who would not identify themselves. He said Dr. King had not feared that any particular persons might harm him and Reverend Abernathy was unable to suggest any suspects or to provide any other information which might assist in identifying Dr. King's killer.

On April 11, 1968, Miss Anna Christine Kelly, Manager, Rebel Motor Hotel, 3466 Lamar Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, furnished the following information from records maintained by the Rebel Motor Hotel:

On April 3, 1968, Eric S. Galt, 2608 Highland Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama, registered in room 34 and departed on April 4, 1968. He stated on his registration card that he was driving a Mustang bearing Alabama license plate 1-38993. Miss Kelly stated that she could not remember Eric S. Galt.

On April 5, 1968, Mrs. Bessie Brewer, 422½ South Main Street, Apartment 2, Memphis, Tennessee, furnished the following information:

She was the manager of the boarding house at 422½ South Main Street, Memphis. On Thursday, April 4, 1968, between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m., a white male individual knocked on the door of her apartment which also served as the office, and he inquired about renting a room. She subsequently rented him Apartment 5-B, which rented for \$8.50 per week, paid in advance. The individual identified himself as John Willard and paid her with a \$20 bill he took from his right front pants pocket and also gave her fifty cents in coin. She described John Willard as a white male, 30 to 35 years of age, six feet, weighing approximately 190 pounds.

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On April 5, 1968, Charlie Quitman Stephens, Room 6-B, 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, furnished the following information:

In the late afternoon of April 4, 1968, he and his wife were in their room at 422½ South Main Street, Memphis. He heard what he is certain was a shot, and was certain that the shot he heard came from the bathroom located a few feet from where he was sitting. He had no way of knowing, but estimated it was some time between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. Upon hearing this shot, he walked out of the bathroom, through his living-bedroom, and opened the door leading to the hallway and observed a man running west down this hallway, and this man was carrying a large bundle of some kind. The man continued to run to the end of the hallway, turned left and apparently thereafter ran down the stairway onto the street, although he could not actually see the man going down the stairway. It immediately occurred to Mr. Stephens that this was the same man he had observed earlier in the afternoon, possibly around mid afternoon, standing at the door to Room 5-B, which was located immediately west of Mr. Stephens' living-bedroom. He stated that around mid afternoon he had seen the man with Mrs. Brewer standing in the hallway at the entrance to Room 5-B looking into the room. He assumed that this was some new guest looking for a room. He later heard someone in Room 5-B and assumed that the man he observed with Mrs. Brewer had rented the room next door. He recalled that on several different occasions he heard footsteps in this room and also heard a person leaving the room and walking past his, Mr. Stephens' room, and entering

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a common bathroom at the end of the hall. He was aware that the person who went from room 5-B to the bathroom remained in the bathroom for a considerable period of time.

On April 24, 1968, photographs of James Earl Ray taken in 1955, 1960 and 1966 and of the bedspread recovered at Memphis on April 4, 1968, were shown to Charlie Quitman Stephens. Stephens said the 1955 and 1960 photographs of Ray were not familiar to him, but that the 1966 profile photograph of Ray appearing in wanted flier 442-1, dated April 19, 1968, and identification order 4182, dated April 20, 1968, looked like the man he saw in Apartment 5-B on April 4, 1968, talking to Mrs. Bessie Brewer. He said he had never seen the bedspread or any similar bedspread at the boarding house or anywhere else.

Mr. Bernell Finley, 1468 Kyle, Memphis, Tennessee, furnished the following information on April 5, 1968:

At approximately 5:20 p.m. on April 4, 1968, he and an acquaintance of his drove to the Canipe Amusement Company, 424 South Main Street, Memphis. Around 6:00 p.m. Mr. Finley heard a noise that sounded like a shot. Shortly thereafter and certainly within a matter of just a minute or so, he heard a second noise near the front door of the Canipe Store. He and others immediately looked to the front door where they saw a box, package or bundle lying immediately in front of the store. He also observed a man walking rapidly south on the sidewalk on the east side of Main Street, and it was obvious that this was the person who had dropped or thrown the package in front of the store. Minutes later, Mr. Finley heard the "screech" of tires and looked up and saw a white Mustang speeding north on Main Street past Canipe Store. He explained that there was a car parked in front of the store and he did not get a full view of the car which had sped away, but he did see the rear portion of the roof line, as well as the trunk, and there is no question in his mind that this was a white car and there was no question in his mind that the car was a white Mustang.

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At the time Mr. Finley did not associate the speeding white Mustang with the man who had dropped the box or package in front of the Canipe Store, but after he had learned what had occurred and reflecting on the matter, he is of the opinion that the man who dropped the package and walked south on the sidewalk past the store was possibly the man who got into the white Mustang and sped away from the area.

On April 5, 1968, Mr. Julius L. Graham, Apartment 5, 805 North Fifth Street, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that he accompanied Mr. Bernell Finley to the Canipe Amusement Company, 424 South Main Street, Memphis, arriving there about 5:30 p.m. on April 4, 1968. He recalled that as they were looking for a parking space he observed two white cars parked in the vicinity of the Canipe Store, one of which was definitely a white Mustang. He later heard tires screech in the vicinity of the store and observed a white Mustang speed north on Main Street. He is positive that the car he observed speeding away from the area was a white Mustang and there was no question in his mind that it was the same white Mustang he had observed earlier when he and Mr. Finley arrived in the vicinity of the store.

In April, 1968, records of Jefferson County Department of Revenue, Birmingham, Alabama revealed 1968 Alabama license plate 1-38993 was issued to Eric S. Galt, 2608 Highland Avenue, Birmingham, for a 1966 Ford Mustang.

On April 11, 1968, a white Ford Mustang, subsequently determined to be a 1966 model, was observed in parking area nine of Capitol Homes, Atlanta, Georgia. This automobile bore 1968 Alabama license plate 1-38993.