

History 215

OUTLINE

Re: Notes w/ King and Memphis Situation

Basic question? What role, if any, did/~~King~~ the FBI play in the King assassination.

No evidence that Hoover FBI had any thing to do with the shooting. No evidence that the Bureau (none made public) knew of any conspiracy against his life. We are to remember that the FBI's COINTELPRO against King continued right up until his death. Had they known of any conspiracy or were apart of a conspiracy they would have dropped their harrassment (or at least one could make this argument). Why tie themselves to the King assassination by leaving a trail of documentary evidence that they were out to "break" him, etc.

But did the FBI play any role in forcing King to return to Memphis and help create a climate that would raise the risks of his assassination?

Begin w/ the so-called "Black Messiah" letter. What is this letter all about? How would you characterize this letter? or directive?

Go over the high points of the document/directive

1. FBI targets what groups in this sanctioned COINTELPRO exercise? [What is the meaning of COINTELPRO.

Define counterintelligence as used in Govt. agencies (See Woodward--Weil

2. Background/ goal [Rationals for this action]. One of them was to prevent violence on the part of black nationalist-hate groups. Interesting that King would fall into this category. A practitioner of non-violence was classified by Bureau as an exponent Or generator of violence.

Make the point: That after 1963 the FBI should have dropped all surveillance against King.

3. Terminology in the directive: Prevent a coalition of militant black groups to head off a "Mau Mau" in America. (Who were the Mau Mau?)

Prevent the rise of a Black Messiah

4. Timing of directive: Wants to see programs in planning and ready for deployment within ninety days.

5. Language of last paragraphs--comments from class