

Continued Funding Sought

Assassins Probe Unit Details New Evidence

WASHINGTON (AP) — A special House investigating committee said yesterday it is looking "into new and previously unpursued leads" in the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Two examples, previously disclosed, were cited in the committee's progress report. Rep. Thomas N. Downing, D-Va., the committee chairman, said they were regarded as "highly significant."

He said they are being evaluated, but he emphasized, as did other committee members and chief counsel Richard A. Sprague, that it is far too early to reach any conclusions.

The 26-page report was largely a plea that the committee be continued by the new Congress and that its request for \$6.5 million be approved.

"This is not a spectacular report, full of revelations," Downing said at a news conference. "There are no bombshells in it. But there are hundreds and hundreds of unanswered questions."

The House voted to create the committee last September, but the panel will go out of existence unless the House in the incoming 95th Congress votes to recreate it.

As new evidence, the committee cited a statement attributed to an unidentified witness that the alleged King assassin, James Earl Ray, had told him he was contacted in Europe by "another person from whom he received further instructions to aid in his continuing flight."

The report said this witness had never been interviewed before by any investigative agency.

Sprague, asked about this, said the committee is trying to determine how credible the witness is.

The committee report, in its other example of new leads, said staff investigators had been sent to Mexico to interview witnesses about statements made there by Lee Harvey Oswald within 60 days of President Kennedy's assassination.

"These witnesses had never been sought out before by any investigative body, notwithstanding the fact that they had important information" about Oswald's statements, the report said.