

Mark Lane: New York Free Press of 13 June 1968, page 3 column 4:

Several days after the murder of Dr. King, according to a Novak and Evan's column, at a conference at the Department of Justice, Clark was asked about his public statements following the murder. He replied, the column revealed, that he knew his public statements ^{1/} were false but he felt that they would help restore calm to the country.

Evans and Novak column: Sunday April 21, 1968:

FBI GRUMBLES

Attorney General Aggravated Bureau
By Glowing Report on King Case

The deep-seated unhappiness of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI with its boss, Attorney General Ramsey Clark, was aggravated by Clark's misleading public optimism about a quick solution of the murder of...King. FBI agents working on the King case grumbled privately that Clark's repeated statements hinting at imminent capture of the assassin were not justified by the actual progress of the investigation. On the contrary, some agents complained that what legitimate information the Attorney General did let drop risked drying up the killer's trail.

In Justice Department conferences, Clark justified his contribution to the credibility gap on the grounds that optimistic talk about closing the case "would help morale"—that is, calm down Negro anger in the turbulent days immediately following the murder.

^{1/} To the effect that there was no conspiracy, rather than that an arrest was imminent, as is clear from the context of this excerpt from Lane's article.