

Old King-JFK Items Probed

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The 500 or more items had all been made public before, but House Assassination Committee Chairman Louis Stokes said his probe had to start with basics.

In an event staged for television cameras, the struggling committee yesterday displayed cartons and packages of previously documented evidence relating to the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Exhibits included the Remington 30.06 rifle said to have been the murder weapon.

Carton after carton, flown up under a three-man guard from a sealed vault in Memphis, Tenn., was hauled before cameras in the hearing room.

Every item had been recorded years ago, but Stokes, an Ohio Democrat, said the panel's investigation had to begin with the physical evidence and proceed to other evidence and witnesses, possible even James Earl Ray, the man convicted of killing King.

The evidence suggested the committee was concentrating on the King case instead of the murder of John F. Kennedy.

The after non session, scheduled at the last inute, was the first in public since former chairman Henry Gonzalez, D-Tex., resigned in a dispute with chief counsel Richard Sprague.

With the rifle were three letters said to have been written by Ray from his cell in Tennessee, indicating he might be willing to talk to the committee members or investigators.

Ray, on a 99-year sentence, is seeking a new trial.

The committee says it has uncorroborated, unspecified evidence that others may have participated in the planning or carrying out of the King murder and that others may have had prior knowledge of the Kennedy assassination at Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

Stokes told reporters yesterday he did not know if Ray would be brought to Washington and what the details of his testimony — if it would come about — might include.

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