

# CBS NEWS

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**CBS News/Washington**

WHO'S WHO  
EDITION I, SHOW 10  
as broadcast over the  
CBS TELEVISION NETWORK  
Tuesday, March 15, 1977

With CBS News Correspondents Dan Rather and Charles Kuralt

THE PRESS AS HOSTAGE  
Produced by Ellen B Colyer

L.L. BEAN  
Produced by David Buksbaum

JAMES EARL RAY  
Produced by Esther Kartiganer

KING TUTANKHAMEN  
Produced by Charles Kuralt  
Associate Producer - Jonnet Steinbaum

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DAN RATHER: Good evening. I'm Dan Rather. Barbara Howar is away on assignment. Charles Kuralt reports from On The Road. And this is WHO'S WHO - these people and their stories.

James Earl Ray - after eight years of silence in prison, as the assassin of Martin Luther King, for the first time on television he tells his story.

Did you fire the shot that killed Dr. Martin Luther King?

JAMES EARL RAY: No, and I think now, based on investigations of those who have represented me, that we could prove it through some type of judicial proceedings.

RATHER: Max Robinson - a Washington newsman caught in the middle of the Hanafi Moslem story.

Is the press an unwitting ally of the terrorists, or only a hostage itself?

[Phone rings; background noises]

MAX ROBINSON: They're going to kidnap me. I'm going to be kidnapped by the Hanafis.

RATHER: L.L. Bean - the family name that stands for a store that stands for a style - if you call boots and backpacks style.

[Music - display of gallery portraits]

[ANNOUNCEMENTS]

RATHER: Terrorism, television. Each new episode of kidnapping or hijacking seems to reinforce that link, raising questions about the role of the media in these nerve-wracking incidents. After last week's siege of Washington by a group of Hanafi Moslems holding well over a hundred hostages, no less a source than the U.N. Ambassador, Andrew Young, called it an example of "glorifying and advertising" these kinds of events. Newsmen call it "covering the story". But when violent people are playing to the camera, there's no question that the medium itself can become a kind of hostage, and the reporter has to dodge and struggle to keep from being captured and used. That was the spot a Washington newsman named Max Robinson found himself in last week. As anchorman at television station WTOP, he was in the middle of the story that held the country's attention.

It was an act of terrorism so broad, so bizarre, so many lives at stake, that it brought the nation's capital to a standstill. After the murder of one man and the wounding of many others, the terrorists held three buildings and a hundred and thirty-four hostages at gunpoint. Police vainly tried to set up some channel of communication with them. But this is an age of media consciousness, of politics by public terror, and the terrorists insisted on an audience for

their negotiations. The only channel they would accept was the media. The man they wanted to communicate through was Max Robinson, for the last two years the face and voice of WTOP's six and eleven P.M. newscasts, the broadcast with the biggest local audience. The terrorists established a telephone dialogue with Robinson, who was the first to broadcast their demands. Among other things: that a new movie about the prophet Mohammed be banned, because they found it offensive.

MAX ROBINSON: But once the film is removed from this country, once-- You are asking that those responsible for the deaths, or who killed your children, be brought to the B'nai B'rith Building.

HAMAAS ABDUL KHAALIS: And the ones who killed Malcolm.

ROBINSON: And the ones who killed Malcolm.

KHAALIS: That's right. I want them.

ROBINSON: And you're asking for the seven hundred and fifty dollars.

KHAALIS: I want them, and the seven hundred and fifty dollars. And be sure you make on the radio that I turned down millions of dollars, so it's not the seven hundred and fifty, but this dog-ass Judge Braman. He held me in contempt of court because I charged the murderers that murdered my babies. Now, what do you think about that? And you think I'm going to roll over and play dead? What do you think I am? Some kind of jokester? I take my faith serious.

RATHER: At thirty-seven, Robinson is a twelve-year veteran of the news business. A college drop-out, an Air Force man who went home to Virginia and started pounding on newsroom doors - unsuccessfully until things started opening up for blacks in Washington. As a TV reporter around town, he had covered some big local stories, some other Moslem stories. His professional judgment, he says, had never been so critically tested.

KHAALIS: When I-- when I had to sell that, do you think I went through all that as a joke, Max? Do you?

ROBINSON: I understand what you're saying.

KHAALIS: All right, then.

ROBINSON: After you--

KHAALIS: I'm very serious about that.

ROBINSON: You just made those-- you have made--

KHAALIS: What about those sharpshooters, brother? They may have moved them somewhere else. Keep stacking, boys. Keep stacking, boys. Move it faster. Make 'em move faster, Latif. Work 'em!

ROBINSON: Hamaas?

KHAALIS: Yes.

ROBINSON: You talked to Police Chief Cullinane a few moments ago.

KHAALIS: Yes.

ROBINSON: What were your demands of him?

KHAALIS: Same thing, Max. I'm through. All right? Been talking all day. Okay?

ROBINSON: Thank you, sir.

KHAALIS: All right.

ROBINSON: In terms of understanding what you're covering, in terms of the sensitivity of what you're covering-- You're talking about emotional sensitivity. It's a little different from sensitivity for facts. You can get the facts. And all of us get the facts. That's a very important part of the business. In my struggle to be a good journalist, I have no fear of having that kind of sensitivity. But I recognize that the danger is that you can go overboard and become a participant, become an advocate. I think the only reason that I have been called a participant, or that I was involved or in the middle, as has been said and many expressions have been used, was simply because I got it first and I got an understanding of it. That's all.

[Studio technicians - crosstalk]

RATHER: By his direct contact on the air with the kidnapers, Robinson was already walking a thin line between reporter and messenger, between observer and participant. Now, a telephone call he was about to receive could push him over the line - and into the story he was covering.

ROBINSON [on phone]: Hello? Hello? This is Max Robinson. Yes? What did I say? What did I say? I said that. I said that on the air. What did I say about Malcolm--? Would you tell me what I said? I can't-- How can I straighten it up if you don't tell me what it was? [Background voices throughout phone conversation]

They're going to kidnap me.

MAN IN STUDIO: What?

ROBINSON: I'm going to be kidnapped by the Hanafis. Let's get back to work.

RATHER: With a wife and four children at home, Robinson didn't take the threat lightly. But it didn't change his approach to the story. He went back to his anchor position without visibly missing a beat.

ROBINSON: Gordon Barnes, we've had pretty good weather for the past week or so, or the past four or five days. Today wasn't great--

GORDON BARNES: Wasn't as good as I expected. We had some high clouds this afternoon.

ROBINSON: Which is beginning of the weekend.

RATHER: Although the audience remained unaware of the threat, News Director Jim Snyder and his staff were concerned. They felt this was not just another crank call.

ROBINSON: The guy sounds like he might be one of those folks. They've taken three buildings; it would not be too difficult for them to take me, I would assume. You know, if you can take three buildings, you can sure take a little reporter. And they said they're going to take me, meaning kidnap. Now, what have we done in terms of dealing with making that a little more difficult than it is right now? I'm telling you that he sounds like some of the Hanafis that I've run across.

MAN: Well, we have security here in the building. You can stay here in the building--

ROBINSON: You mean our regular security? Holy hell, that's all--  
[crosstalk - indistinct]

MAN: We do have about three uniformed policemen downstairs.

ROBINSON: Have you informed the police?

RATHER: And, indeed, two district policemen were brought in for Robinson's round-the-clock protection - until the announcement that the hostages were finally released.

ROBINSON [on TV]: The ordeal of the entire city has ended - the ordeal of the hostages, the ordeal of those people who worked long hours. In fact, all of the people, the officials who were involved for the past thirty-nine hours in dealing with the situation, the likes of which the nation's capital has never seen before. This story's not over, but certainly the-- the dramatic part, the part that held this town on edge for thirty-nine, forty-some hours, that part is over. You can feel the relief. You can feel the sigh in-- in the nation's capital this morning. All of us feel it. I think journalists are the last to feel it.

RATHER: Last week in Washington, it was Max Robinson. Next week, it could be, as Walter Cronkite talked about in an interview, some other reporter - anywhere.

Since the terrorists seem to be getting better at handling us, are we getting any better at handling them?

WALTER CRONKITE: Well, I don't know that we are. I suppose experience always counts for something, so maybe we are getting better. I don't know really, though, what we could or should do about this, Dan. It seems to me that we cannot control the events that need to be reported. All we can do is be responsible in reporting the events that occur.

RATHER: Do you think it's fair criticism to say that we provoke the terrorists?

CRONKITE: I think that it's something that is within the range of possibility. I don't think it can be dismissed quickly. But I don't see where that really counts on how we handle the story. I don't think we can suppress stories like this.

RATHER: What about-- Ambassador Andrew Young, Sunday, said he wished, quote, "there could be a law that would restrict the publication of information regarding a violent crime." Now, could the First Amendment stand such a law?

CRONKITE: No, it couldn't at all. In no way. The First Amendment says: "There shall be no law which infringes on the freedom of speech and press."

RATHER: In your judgment, what can we say to those people who continually say to us, "Listen, we cannot allow this to happen and keep happening and escalate each time" - that "those of you in the media have to do something"?

CRONKITE: The-- the-- I don't know how the society got so media-oriented in blaming the messenger for everything that transpires in our society and for all of its ills. We are only the messenger. It's other aspects of society which have to take action. Speedier justice, better forms of justice, perhaps. A better way to treat those who have just or unjust claims against society. We have to report it.

RATHER: With television's instantaneous coverage and the resulting instantaneous decisions of what we cover, what is aired and how we air it, do we have enough time in television to contemplate the consequences of what we do?

CRONKITE: I'm not sure we should be concerned about the consequences of what we do, though. Those are strong words, I know. They-- they are inclined to come back to haunt one, because I've said them before, and I know what the dangers of it-- of that statement can be.

RATHER: You know, a lot of people are going to say, "Well, Mr. Cronkite, you've got to worry about the consequences."

CRONKITE: That's right. But, you see, when we start worrying about the consequences, we're beginning-- beginning to play another role other than that of reporters. We're beginning to play a judgmental role. We're beginning to play God. And I don't think I'm equipped to do that. I'm not sure I know any journalist who is.

RATHER: A woman from the PTA or a businessman down the street says to you: "Mr. Cronkite, why wouldn't you be in favor of a complete and total blackout once something like this happens?" What's your answer?

CRONKITE: Because that's not serving the public's best interest at all. All that does is lead to rumor and speculation, to doubts that the press is telling the whole story under any circumstances. And that's the most important consideration of all. If we cover up stories under any circumstance, the public has every right to believe that we cover them up under any circumstance. And if we cover up at all, then the whole belief, reliance upon the press is gone.

RATHER: My last question. This whole subject scares the hell out of me. Does it you?

CRONKITE: Yes, it does. Sure, it's a-- I think it's a very, very serious problem for all of us. And we needn't go into, here, the permutations of it. But I think that's why you're scared and that's why I'm scared. We all know they're there.

[ANNOUNCEMENTS]

RATHER: When it comes to fashion, I guess my eye is no better than the next man's - which is to say, I can tell the difference between mini and maxi, but don't ask me what an A-line is. There's a current trend, though, that even the most fashion-blind of us men-folk have no trouble recognizing, though we may not use the official fashion-page terms to describe it: casual, outdoorsy, down-home; or how about red-neck chic?

It started back in the blue-jeaned sixties, and it reached some kind of crest last year, with the announcement of the Coty Award - the American fashion industry's most prestigious honor. Past winners had included elegant names like Halston, Bill Blass, Ralph Lauren, Anne Klein. This time, there was added to that coveted list the name of L.L. Bean. No, not Geoffrey Beene, although he did get the award one year. But, yes, we said: L.L. Bean of Freeport, Maine and mail-order fame.

Now, does this look like high fashion to you? The look of the bag packer, hiking through the High Sierras, quietly canoing on a glacial lake? Well, this is the L.L. Bean look - the gear look, as the fashion magazines call it. How did this become the Coty Award winner last year? Grace Mirabella, Executive Editor of *Vogue* magazine.

Miss Mirabella, to a lot of people you are the first word and the last word in fashion. You give the Coty Award. Would you give the Coty Award to L.L. Bean? You got to be kidding!

GRACE MIRABELLA: Everyone is asked to send in a ballot with their list of names for every possible category. There wasn't a ballot



this year that didn't have on it special award category to "gear" - what everyone called "gear", and L.L. Bean was a part of that. But, I mean, it was the most natural idea. It came so naturally from everyone, because "gear" really is what it is. It's clothes to wear in the elements. Clothes that you hack and clothes that you work with and clothes that don't pretend to be anything but honest, the way sneakers are honest.

RATHER: It's a long way from Paris and New York, and it doesn't look like anybody's high-fashion house, but it is. Slap-dab in the middle of the Maine woods, this old ramshackle building has become one of the fashion centers of the world. It has also become a national institution, whose friends and supporters are fierce in their loyalty.

WOMAN: You know, I'm wearing my Bean's boots.

SALESMAN: Oh, terrific!

WOMAN: My husband is wearing his Bean's wool shirt. We're a Bean's family.

RATHER: What it was, before it became a fashion center, was an old-fashioned sporting goods store and mail-order house. It all started with a funny looking hunting shoe. L.L. Bean, you see, was, as man and boy, a Maine outdoorsman, consumed with hunting and fishing - and wet, sore feet. Old L.L., as everybody called him, decided to make his own boots. He put leather tops on rubber bottoms to wed comfort with waterproofing. The idea was a success. Word spread quickly. L.L. borrowed four hundred dollars and built a legend, out of his awkward looking boot. Last year alone, his heirs sold nearly one-hundred-twenty-thousand pairs, in every state of the Union and in more than seventy foreign countries. For example, when the Israeli army occupied the Golan Heights in the winter of 1967, an SOS went out to L.L. Bean for large quantities of the famed Maine hunting boot in a hurry. The order was filled. No problem. By mail, of course - because, while the Freeport L.L. Bean store sells goods over the counter, twenty-four hours a day, three-hundred-sixty-five days a year, most of the company's business is done by mail. It is one of the most prosperous mail-order houses anywhere - so prosperous, so busy, they have their own zip code: 04033.

Old L.L., aged ninety-four, died in 1967, after running his original four-hundred-dollar debt into a three-and-a-half-million-dollar-a-year bonanza. But even that pales when compared with what his family has done with it since then.

The down-east Maine Yankee who now runs the country store is L.L.'s grandson, Leon Gorman.

LEON GORMAN: We've obviously had a blockbuster in the month of January.

RATHER: Since that time, grandson Leon has taken the small, three-and-a-half-million gross and built it into a forty-million-dollar-a-year

giant. The business remains strictly family-owned. That's cousin Linda Bean Jones, a member of the board. Leon's brother, Tom Gorman. He's the store traffic manager, also a member of the board. Brother Jim Gorman. And that's Aunt Hazel. All of them members of the board. [Voices of Gorman family] This year, their projected sales should exceed fifty million dollars.

How in the world did a backwater, backwoods Maine country store become such a success? And what does it tell us about ourselves? Psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers, for twenty years a Bean's enthusiast.

DR. JOYCE BROTHERS: It makes an emphasis on the handmade - the handmade moccasins and the craftsmanship, which says we care about the individual. And in a time when everybody is turned off by the-- the plastic and the synthetic and the mass production, it is a way of saying, even though it isn't individually made, it is a way of pretending that they care as an individual. So that, in essence, L.L. Bean is selling a kind of an illusion, at a time when our life is so mass-produced and so synthetic.

RATHER: The backbone of the Bean mystique, they'll tell you, is personal service - very personal service.

MARY DYER: This fisherman shoe is more practical and you can wear it right in the water, and--

RATHER: That's Mary Dyer. For seventeen years, she has talked to customers like this.

DYER: -- and the leather will be soft.

GORMAN: We-- we've had people coming through on the Maine Turnpike, for instance, who were in such a hurry to get to a fishing camp that we've had to deliver their products at one of the toll gates, you know, on the Turnpike, at an extra cost-- service-charge cost.

RATHER: But you can't run a business that way?

GORMAN: Well, we-- we always have. We have people that come into the Freeport yacht basin in their sailboats, or power boats, and want a lift up here to shop the store, and we'll send somebody down and pick them up.

RATHER: How can you prevent success from spoiling L.L. Bean?

GORMAN: Well, I don't know. I don't think-- it's-- it's not going to our heads and that sort of thing. And I think we're still committed to doing what we've always done. And I think many people just naturally try to do the best they can, and don't get, you know, carried away by, you know, success or whatever.

MAN: Frankly, you may not like this, but I'm-- I'm disappointed because of all the renovations. I-- I remember when we had, you know, bare-- bare board-- floors. [Laughing]

GORMAN: Well, we-- we've had some fights about the rug, but it's something we just had to do. Actually, the wooden floor was wearing so thin that we couldn't stand it any more, and we just had to put something on it to keep from, you know, going through.

RATHER: What about the criticism - which *The Wall Street Journal*, among others, at least at one time, reports - that the profits could be considerably better than they are if you'd adopt more modern method? I notice that you still do a lot of hand-stitching, for example, on the leather.

GORMAN: That's just the only way you can make that type of footwear is with hand-sewing. It's been tried on machines. They tried pre-punching it, other techniques to-- you know, how to make-- making a moccasin, but there's no other way to make them than the way our people do, and that's by hand-sewing.

RATHER: Someone wrote that what you're selling is the illusion of being a woodsman. Would you argue with that?

GORMAN: Well, we sell steak, not sizzle, and maybe that's part that goes along with it. But we're still selling, you know, basic, functional, good-quality, durable products. And, you know, if they have other qualities along with them, why that's fine.

RATHER: What you should understand about the legend that is L.L. Bean is the two faces of the business. The public face is the store - creaking floors, down-home talk and all of that. The private face - what built the business, what makes it go and grow, what makes it the money machine it is - is this.

[Computer noises]

A computer-centered, heavily advertised, sophisticated mail-order merchandise mart. Last year alone, their postal bill was two million, five-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars. They sometimes get as many as twenty-three thousand letters a day. The L.L. Bean catalog, holy-writ to the true believers, goes out to over two million homes, four times a year. What the people who get the catalog year after year thirst for, what they're looking for every time, is something new. This fall it might be a new Bean boot.

MAN: Charlie Carter said that if they scythed this down a little more, it'll bring that seam in, so it won't make the boot look quite so long.

GORMAN: How long is it going to take to get that finished up?

MAN: It's a fall item.

GORMAN: Fall item, yeah. 1977?

MAN: Seventy-seven. Yeah. [Laughter]

RATHER: No decision has been made yet. It's still on the drawing board.

What is it that is so seductive about the Bean line? Why is it that so many city slickers and suburbanites want the look of a Maine game warden? For an answer, you might ask Julia Schoen, fashion editor of *Glamour* magazine.

JULIA SCHOEN: I don't think it's so much that they want to look like that. I think it-- I think it has more to do with the-- the psychology of how it makes you feel when you wear them. I mean, for instance, personally for me, I feel much more relaxed and much more open, and I feel I can walk into a room and sit on the floor. I just think it's a whole trend towards a much more casual, open approach to-- to all levels of our life.

RATHER: Well, in terms of fashion, how important is this look?

SCHOEN: We feel it's so important that, for the first time, we are devoting the entire fashion lead of our June issue to mail-order merchandise, and we've broken it down into categories, such as camping gear, which will include all of the really rugged, outdoor kinds of things, and will include catalog people who make that-- that kind of merchandise. For example, the poncho, which L.L. Bean puts in as-- as, I think, a fishing poncho. And we're putting a silk shirt under it, and we're putting silk trousers, black silk pa-- evening pants with it, and nice, sexy, strappy little sandals, and a silk scarf, and it's-- it's a wonderful look to go-- to go out in an evening.

RATHER: Have you changed the merchandise to fit the fashion trend?

GORMAN: No.

RATHER: For example, can you buy flared trousers as well as straight-leg trousers?

GORMAN: No, not-- not-- not if I can help it. No.

SCHOEN: It's a great classic American sports gear, and they're things you'll have in your wardrobe the rest of your life. I mean, some of the things that I now wear for professional reasons and-- and I wear more as a fashion item, I may in a year, or a year-and-a-half, wear as a casual weekend kind of thing. They're things I feel that will be-- they're cla-- they're going to be classics in my wardrobe, that I-- that I'll keep.

RATHER: What the woodsman's temple in Freeport, Maine, old L.L.'s country store, really sells, the secret of its success, is escape. They are selling the smell, the feel, the illusion of what we were - and still hanker to be.

[ANNOUNCEMENTS]

ANNOUNCER: WHO'S WHO, a CBS News weekly magazine, will continue.

[ANNOUNCEMENTS]

DAN RATHER: Like the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert, the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr. is a case that refuses to be closed. Nine years later, a special committee of Congress is investigating the crime. The Attorney General of the United States has publicly said he wants to talk to the man who sits in prison as the assassin. It was on April fourth, 1968, that Dr. King was shot in Memphis, Tennessee. In June, James Earl Ray was arrested in England for the crime. What we subsequently heard about Ray was that he was an escaped convict who had been on a strange, year-long odyssey, winding up in Memphis. What we heard from Ray was that his travels had been directed and financed by an underworld character he knew only as Raoul. It seemed a simple case when James Earl Ray pleaded guilty - but just three days later, he recanted, claiming that he'd been railroaded into the plea by his own attorney, Percy Foreman. For eight years, the courts have refused to grant him a new trial. For eight years, the questions about a possible conspiracy have persisted. And all this time, Ray has declined to tell his side of the story on television - until I went to interview Ray last week, at Brushy Mountain Penitentiary in Tennessee, where he is serving a ninety-nine-year sentence as the assassin of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Did you fire the shot that killed Dr. Martin Luther King?

JAMES EARL RAY: No, and I think now, based on investigations of those who have represented me, that we could prove it through some type of judicial proceedings.

RATHER: 6:01 PM. Immediately after Dr. King was shot, people with him pointed toward a rooming house across the street. Ray had rented a room there that day. The state claims he fired the fatal shot from there. Ray says he has an alibi.

Now, this, of course, is critical.

RAY: Yes.

RATHER: As your recollection as to where you were between, let us say, 5:50 PM and just after 6:00 o'clock, April fourth, 1968. You remember going to the service station--

RAY: Yes.

RATHER: -- having the tire fixed.

RAY: I didn't-- didn't have it fixed. They said that somebody was busy. It was the business hour and so they didn't have time for it. And I never did get the tire fixed.

RATHER: My point is that you were not in the rooming house - or were you - between, let's say, after 5:30 PM?

RAY: No, I'm positive I wasn't in there after 5:30.

RATHER: Let me take you back to that day in the courtroom, when you had your day in court - short day it-- it was. The judge asked you whether you were doing it voluntarily - the guilty plea - and you said yes, sir. I-- I can't understand, if-- if you knew that you didn't pull the trigger on the gun that killed Dr. King, why you would go that far and say those things.

RAY: Well-- well, it-- this was all decided on March the ninth, the day before the-- the plea was entered. At that time, I'd determined that there was no way that I could force Percy Foreman going to trial with-- with any prospects of success. But I assumed if I did enter a plea of guilty, and-- and I could have had an investigation after the plea, with new-- newly discovered evidence, there's a possibility that-- that the case could have been reversed when it went to trial.

RATHER: That same day when you entered your guilty plea, there was a whole series of questions involving the voluntary nature of your plea - that you knew what you were doing, that you weren't being forced, that you knew you were giving up your right to appeal - all of those things were laid out to you, and you answered to all of those, yes, you knew what you were doing.

RAY: If I had it all to do over again, I-- I really don't see how I could have done anything different.

RATHER: If somebody else did it, why sit here silent? Why not tell everything you know and do everything you can to find the other people?

RAY: Well, I don't know. I think a lot of people have a-- sort of a Pollyanna view of the legal system. All you got to do is go to the prosecutor and say, "Oh, here-- here is what it is. Turn me loose" - you know. That's it. That's not the way it is. If-- if you-- if you testify to the prosecutor, he'll just use what you tell him to weave in his story. It doesn't necessarily mean he is going to turn you out or anything like that.

RATHER: The Attorney General, if I read his language correctly, and perhaps I don't, at least in a between-the-lines fashion, has held out the following prospect: that if you would reveal to him information that you've never revealed before, help solve the, quote, "conspiracy aspects" - unquote - in the case, that perhaps some arrangement could be worked out for a reduction of your sentence. Now, what do you think about that?

RAY: Well, I don't-- I don't think much of anything about that. This thing of being a state witness, or even being perceived to be a state witness, is a-- there's a lot of pitfalls there. I mean, you can look at these people like Valachi, and then he winds up down in solitary confinement. If I testify for anyone, it'd be my-- it'd be for myself. And I'm not concerned with the state's case. That's their problem. I don't want to get involved in any type of thing-- any type of situation whereby I would have to rely on the-- the Justice Department, because they have-- I think they have a sort of an inherent hostility for anyone from my background, anyway. So, I want to-- I'd rather keep them at arm's length.

RATHER: Would you be willing to talk here, at the prison, with the Attorney General?

RAY: No, I can't see-- I can't see any advantage of having an ex parte meeting with the Attorney General. I have no advantage-- no objections if he wants to question me under oath on the witness stand.

RATHER: Well, let me stop for a moment and ask you. Are you willing to testify before the House committee set up to look into the death of Dr. King, as well as the John Kennedy assassination?

RAY: I think it would all depend. I think if they go on the premise that I'm guilty, and they're just-- the only thing they're interested in is finding out maybe who else is involved, I don't see much point in me testifying then. If I do testify, I don't-- I don't want-- I wouldn't want to testify in any type of Executive session, and the various members leak various-- well, not members of the Congress, but members of the staff leak information out like they did the Church committee. You know, they'll say Ray said this and Ray said that. I-- I would rather testify in public - not necessarily on TV or anything, but have a public record, where it'd be available to anyone who was interested in it.

RATHER: According to Ray, he was in Memphis on the day of the assassination, under instructions from a man he says he knows only as Raoul - a man whose instructions he claims he had been following for a year. He says he thought Raoul brought him to Memphis to take part in a gun-running scheme.

Could you describe Raoul for me?

RAY: Well, I couldn't describe him except to say he's a-- he appeared to be a Latin, average height, five feet nine, a hundred and fifty pounds, kind of a-- The ha-- hair was the only thing that was-- that stand out. Most of the Latins are dark-haired and he was-- had kind of auburn-- auburn look. He's a dark auburn. That's the only thing that really distinguished him from anyone else. Of course, I suppose, you could dye your hair or something, if you want to.

RATHER: Did he at any time give you any indication of his being in contact with or belonging to any group?

RAY: No, I-- My impression was-- it was more or less a-- some type of things for monetary gain. There was-- there was no messing in politics or anything like that.

RATHER: Did he ever mention to you the possibility of assassination or hit man operation?

RAY: No, I don't-- that would have been a-- that-- that would have been kind of out of my league. I-- I don't-- I don't really think I have the constitution for all that type of stuff. I don't say that as a virtue. Actually, it's-- might be a handicap in this type of society.

RATHER: And on the bothersome question of where the money came from.

RAY: All together, I spent, I think, it was between nine hundred-- nine thousand, five hundred dollars and ten thousand dollars. So--

RATHER: It-- This is from the time you escaped from the Missouri prison in April of 1967 until the time of your arrest in London after the King killing--

RAY: That's correct.

RATHER: -- in 1968. You estimate you spent between ninety-five hundred and ten thousand dollars.

RAY: It has to be somewhere in between there. Yes.

RATHER: Where did you get the money?

RAY: Well, I suppose I got it-- a certain amount-- I didn't-- I never got a large sum of money at one time. I think two thousand dollars was the most I ever came across at one time. And I got this off the individual I mentioned, this Raoul, or-- whatever you want to call him.

RATHER: You have to know how many people who hear you tell this story will say to themselves that is a cock-and-bull story if ever I heard one--

RAY: Yeah.

RATHER: -- that James Earl Ray has gotten himself in a world of trouble. He's trying to concoct some story that will help him out of it. And this Raoul never existed, and that thing is fantasy from beginning to end.

RAY: I-- I think so. I think-- I have-- I have, based on my background, the-- you know, in jails and out, I think people would be skeptical of anything I testified to through the media.



RATHER: Let me see if I understand you here - that you're saying, all right, you understand the people are skeptical, perhaps even cynical about your story of Raoul--

RAY: Yes. Yes.

RATHER: -- and all of this. But that you're convinced that if you could put yourself under oath and put other people under oath, with wide-ranging subpoena powers, that it would be proven that Raoul did exist?

RAY: I don't know that this certain individual-- I think-- I think it'd be proven that someone did exist, whether it's that particular name or not. But I think I could have my previous testimony corroborated.

RATHER: What about the charge that you're a racist-- always have been?

RAY: If I went-- went before a jury and-- and, you know, tried to pretend like-- that I'd spent a lifetime as a humanitarian and ministering to the poor and all that stuff, then they'd know I was either crazy or lying. So-- There's a lot of self-segregation in the United States, and I think-- I think a good example is probably in federal prisons.

RATHER: No, but what-- [indistinct crosstalk]-- What we're driving at here is something deeper than that.

RAY: No, you was talking about-- Yeah?

RATHER: That you hated black people, always hated black people. That's--

RAY: Well, I think that's nonsense.

RATHER: Is that true?

RAY: I think-- I usually judge someone on-- on his, you know, the individual person. But I think there is an instinctive tendency to associate with people if you have something in common with - background and things like that. I don't-- I don't think that's-- means you tried to kill the other person, or anything like that, but just-- it's a-- inconsequential thing, what I consider.

RATHER: I want to run past you various theories that have been put to me as a reporter working on this assassination case over a good many years, and get your reaction to them as theories. First, that unnamed money interests were somehow responsible for Dr. King's death. They wanted to prevent Dr. King from leading his People's March on Washington, for one thing.

RAY: Well, that-- that's the theory I've heard most and the one that attorneys dis-- discuss most. They say he was-- got beyond the integration stage and was interested in economics.

RATHER: Well, another of the theories is that white racists were responsible for this. Their motive for wanting to get rid of Dr. King was obvious.

RAY: No, I think that would be totally false. I think it was their theory that-- that Dr. King's activities were-- was actually helping them, politically.

RATHER: Three, the theory involving black militants being responsible - that Dr. King had become too non-violent for their plans and they wanted to take away leadership for their black movement.

RAY: No, that-- that's one of the two theories that I think the attorneys representing me wanted to put forward. But I just-- I can't subscribe to that-- that type of a theory.

RATHER: How about the Communists, who - so the theory goes - wanted to stir up black hatred and ferment rebellion? Fidel Castro, for example, is claimed had a special interest in this.

RAY: No. I-- I doubt-- I doubt it very much.

RATHER: Have you ever thought about a possible connection between the Dr. King death, your situation and the assassination of President Kennedy?

RAY: Well, the lawyers have discussed it with me. I don't think there's-- that's valid theory at all, because--

RATHER: You don't?

RAY: I don't think you can string a bunch of homicides together, because there's different motives and different interests.

RATHER: When I asked one of your former attorneys what your basic story was, this is what he said to me. And I quote directly. "James Earl Ray would like to have the credit for killing Dr. Martin Luther King, but does not want to have to pay the price."

RAY: That type of conversation there is-- that's more suitable for something entertaining - talk shows or something like that. But there's no-- that's-- someone would have to be insane to, you know, get involved-- wanting publicity and killing someone for publicity, because-- to me it is. I-- I can't conceive of any-- anyone. There is people like that, but I can't conceive of anyone wanting that type of publicity.

RATHER: And you didn't do it?

RAY: No, I didn't do it.

RATHER: James Earl Ray's story comes down to this: that he didn't do it, and the state certainly has never proved it in court.

To someone familiar with the case, Ray's story seems to show that, for the time being at least, Ray is unwilling, or perhaps unable, to shed any really new light on the King assassination.

[ANNOUNCEMENTS]

DAN RATHER: This week, Charles Kuralt's On The Road team covers a story going back thousands of years. It began in the deserts of Egypt, then on to Washington - and ultimately to five other American cities. Don't let the opening fool you. Before he's through, Charlie unfolds a tale of romance, political intrigue - and possibly even murder.

[Carters at various inaugural functions - background noise]

CHARLES KURALT: I thought it was about time that this program, which is supposed to be about people, paid a little attention to the most absorbing personality to hit Washington in recent memory: a Southerner, who became head of state of a rich and powerful nation, hailed by great crowds, but who remains to this day enigmatic and distant and mysterious. I don't mean him. [*Jimmy Carter pictured*] I mean him! [*Statue of King Tutankhamen pictured*]

Tutankhamen, the boy Pharaoh of Egypt, has set Washington right on its ear.

GUIDE [through megaphone]: This looks like a five-hour wait-- [indistinct]-- get a chance to see the show.

KURALT: Since way back last November, hundreds of thousands of people have waited in line, some of them five or six hours, or longer, for the chance that they might get in to see the treasures of King Tut. We were in the neighborhood one day in the On The Road bus, so we thought we'd stop by the National Gallery of Art and see what it is that makes people wait so long to meet a King.

He was only a boy, not an important Pharaoh at all, raised to the throne when he was nine years old and dead at eighteen, in the year one thousand, three hundred and twenty-five, BC. He lived and died a hundred years before Moses led his people out of Egypt. It was all so long ago.

But when you come around the corner here, and look into his child's eyes, you feel the shock of human recognition. He was just a boy. He sat in this little chair as a boy - almost certainly sat in this chair. Any child would like it. He played games at this board. The game is called "thieves" - easy for a child to learn. When he

was older, he went hunting birds with a bow and arrow. You know how kids love bows and arrows. He must have become pretty good at it. It says on this fan that the plumes that used to be on it came from ostriches he shot himself.

The Egyptians thought he was a god. Tutankhamen, living image of the god Amen. Well, you can believe that if you want to. He was a boy, and he's been dead for three thousand, three hundred and two years. So what are all these people doing, waiting here in line so patiently for hour after hour? I think they've come here for more than a glimpse of his golden relics. I think they've come here for a glimpse of him.

You know how celebrities always hang around together. Robert Redford has been here, and Elizabeth Taylor, Billy Carter, the Rockefellers, the Kissingers. I saw Mrs. Mondale in there a few minutes ago. After all these years, thirty-three centuries, this Egyptian boy is a bigger celebrity than any of them. Even J. Carter Brown, the Director of the National Gallery, sometimes looks into his eyes and thinks about that.

J. CARTER BROWN: He had a very beautiful wife. She was young and she was the daughter of the beautiful Nefertiti, who must have been one of the most beautiful women in history. The whole sexual relationships in those days are very complex. They married their sisters and their mothers, and they had children by all these people, and this was considered a religious thing to do. There was a great conviction that the Pharaoh was a god and therefore couldn't marry anyone outside of his immediate family.

KURALT: It was an archeologist named Howard Carter who restored King Tut to celebrity one November afternoon in 1922. After years of sweltering disappointment in the Nile Valley, he drilled a hole - with trembling hands, he said - into the door of a tomb he had finally found, inserted a candle and peered in. His patron, Lord Canarvon, asked anxiously, "Can you see anything?" "It was all I could do," Howard Carter said, "to get out the words, 'Yes, wonderful things.'"

The "wonderful things" will leave Washington this week, and go on to Chicago, New Orleans, Los Angeles, Seattle and New York before returning home to Cairo in 1979. If you go to see these things when they're in your part of the country, I warn you, you're going to find yourself thinking not only about the archeological discovery, spectacular as it was, and not only about the craftsmanship of ancient Egypt, stunning as it is. There is more to think about. While this boy was King, great things happened in Egypt. The throne was moved back to the old capital of Thebes, and old gods and goddesses, once deposed, were restored, and old temples, once closed, were reopened. Tutankhamen, ten or eleven years old at the time, couldn't have had anything to do with any of that. It was the work of his advisor, among them his chief vizier, a scheming old man named Ay.

But in the meantime, what about this boy, and why did he die so young? That's what you'll be thinking about as you look into his eyes.

BROWN: What fascinates me is that the power behind the throne was the old boy, Ay, who had been the power behind his predecessor, and had even been quite powerful in the previous regime, which had been back here at the capital. And we've seen this happen in our own day. Puppets. It seems to me very clear that this was a power play, and the fact that he died from an unknown cause, and yet there is a-- indentation in his skull, me-- makes cynical me think that there was some foul play afoot. And that Ay took over, as he then did. He took over his tomb. He took over all the panoply of being a Pharaoh and really moved in. Now, you can say he had to because the state was under a lot of pressure. It was a far-flung empire and they were under attack, and you couldn't have boy Kings running around handling things with that kind of emergency on a national scale. But whatever the motivations, Ay was a strong man and he came out on top.

It could be equally true that someone dropped that skull in the process of mummification. I don't think the royal mummifiers were that butter-fingered. They were carefully chosen. And why would they be that casual with a god's skull? So that, how did that indentation get there? It was a rough world. There was palace intrigue. Knowing what we do about human nature, which has changed very little over those three millenia, the fact that he was put quietly out of the way makes an awful lot of sense to me.

KURALT: And so what we have here may be a thirty-three-hundred-year-old case of murder. If that was the manner of his death, it makes his life all the more fascinating. Whoever murdered this boy must have thought that, once in his grave, he'd be forgotten. No prophet in history has ever been more mistaken.

A better prophet was the anonymous artist who carved this chalice out of alabaster and devotion, and inscribed it to his handsome young King, dead at eighteen: "May you spend millions of years, you who loved Thebes, with your face to the North Wind, your two eyes beholding happiness."

RATHER: A Washington mystery man - another in our gallery of people worth talking about. I'm Dan Rather, and that's WHO'S WHO.