UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

: MR. TOLSON

DATE: June 8, 1968

OM : C. D. DELOACH

JECT: MURKIN

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. Long
1 - Mr. Mohr
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Gale
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Trotter

Tolson
DeLoach
Mohr
Bishop
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

I called the Attorney General (AG) at approximately 5:50 p. m., June 8, 1968, and advised him that in connection with the conversation in his office with me, the Director had instructed me to send two men to London instead of one for the purpose of escorting the subject back to the United States. The AG was told that this would make a total of four FBI representatives escorting the subject back to this country.

The AG was additionally told that the Director had instructed that the two men in question proceed to London as expeditiously as possible so that they would be on the scene in the event extradition or deportation proceedings occurred faster than anticipated. He was told that towards this end, I had called Joe Califano at the White House, who usually handled military transportation in expedite matters of this nature, to tell him that if he knew of a military plane proceeding to London, it would be appreciated if the FBI representatives could hitch a ride on this plane.

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The AG snappishly inquired as to the reasons why this had not been cleared with him personally. I told him I had specifically mentioned in his office the fact that three men would be suitable for escorting subject Ray back to the United States and that he had disagreed stating that he felt additional men should be assigned to this project. He stated he did not recall this exchange of conversation. I told him I recalled it very well. He stated there was no need to get into a "spitting contest" over this particular issue and that he wanted me to definitely realize that he did not recall such matters being discussed. I told him I would not back down on the matter and that the discussion had taken place. He then turned to another topic.

The AG stated that he wanted me to know that he was unhappy about the manner in which this case had been handled. I immediately asked him for specifics. He stated that obviously the FBI had possessed a great deal of information and had not cut him in on it. He stated that as an example,

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COPY MADE FOR MR. TOLSON

the Deputy Attorney General (DAG) of the United States had called me personally and that I had refused to give him "inside facts." I replied that when the DAG first called me this morning, I had indicated that I had no facts to give him but that a short time later I had called the DAG and had read to him the press release prior to the time the release was given to the wire services. I pointed out to the AG that his Deputy had fully approved the press release and had indicated that it was completely within guidelines of appropriate legal proceedings. The AG replied that he had been told differently. He stated that he had been advised that I had not given any information whatsoever to the DAG. I stated that as indicated in my conversation with him, the facts previously mentioned were true. The AG replied by stating this was one of the biggest cases the Department of Justice will ever have. He then asked me point blank, "Who the hell do you think you're working for?" He quickly added "I'll tell you who you're working for, you're working for the Department of Justice." He next added that he wanted to insist that in the future that any information whatsoever received in this case, any investigative step whatsoever, and any communications be brought to his personal attention without delay. He stated that obviously he had been kept in the dark thusfar and that he did not intend to put up with this in the future.

I told the AG if he insisted upon making such falsifications that there was no need to continue the conversation. I then hung up the phone on him.

The AG's secretary called me back approximately three minutes later and stated that he wanted to speak to me again. He then came on the phone and told me that our conversation had not been over and that he demanded to know why I had hung up the phone on him. I told him that apparently there was no need to continue the conversation and that I did not wish to discuss it further. He stated that he must insist, as Attorney General, that any arrangements made concerning this case be cleared with him. He stated that in connection with the military flight for our Agents that I should have realized Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Vinson wanted to go on the same flight and would have wanted to make arrangements on a personal basis with the White House or the military personnel. I told the AG that if he wanted Vinson to go on a military flight, this was entirely his prerogative to make his own arrangements. The AG then told me he would discuss this case at greater length later on.

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Within five minutes the AG's secretary called again and asked that I come around to his office right away. I took Mr. Rosen with me as a witness. The AG had with him DAG Christopher and AAG Pollak. The conversation was initiated by the AG and he immediately referred to his previous conversation relating to the Agents who were going to London and the discussion which had taken place in his office earlier during the day when I advised him that three Agents would be available in London for the purpose of handling the subject insofar as his return to the United States was concerned. He reviewed what he had said earlier and I repeated exactly the position I had previously taken. There was a stand-off and when he recognized that I had not changed my position, he turned to Rosen for verification at which time Rosen repeated that it was his understanding that three Agents would be available in London and that this matter had been thoroughly discussed at FBI Headquarters earlier.

I made no further reference to this conversation and he then turned to what he said were the three most important considerations in this matter: (1) Security; (2) insuring that all proper legal procedures acceptable to the United States and Great Britain would be followed; (3) that proper interviews would take place.

In this connection, there was a discussion concerning security and he referred to the availability of Legal Attache [redacted]. He insisted that [redacted] meet Vinson at the plane Sunday morning, June 9, 1968. I told him that [redacted] would not be available to meet Vinson inasmuch as [redacted] or one of our people would probably spend all night at the jail. He asked me if this was a true statement. I told him it was a true statement or I would not have made it.

He then referred to the legal proceedings that would take place. He said that Vinson would be in complete charge of this matter, that he would make the arrangements and insure that proper procedures be followed. He said that [redacted] would report to Vinson concerning any developments and that the question of deportation was viewed favorably by him. He said if deportation was pursued, it could be criticized from a legal standpoint insofar as he was concerned. He said transporting the subject by any plane, military or owned by the United States Government, is not a free deportation from any country. He said that his attorneys would be reviewing this matter and would be in a position to make appropriate recommendations to him. He said that the legal procedures which would be followed were obviously paramount and would have to receive first consideration over any expedient investigative procedures. I told the AG at this point that we wanted him to know that the FBI had not injected

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itself into any such so-called legal procedures and that our actions up to this date had been strictly of an investigative nature. I also advised him that I had informed him of the attitude of the British Government with reference to their attitude toward deportation and that this had not been an opinion of FBI representatives in London. I stated that when I mentioned that there was a 60/40 chance that he would be deported, that this was the attitude of the British authorities rather than our representatives.

The AG was advised that we had set in motion the obtaining of the copy of the indictment which had been requested which indictment was returned by the Tennessee authorities naming this subject as the person responsible for the killing of King, that this would be made available immediately upon its receipt and that a properly certified copy was being obtained.

DAG Christopher asked me if the subject was being detained on a "holding action" or as a result of a violation of British law. He was told that the subject was being detained on the basis of entering the country with illegal documents and because he had a loaded gun on his person.

The AG then turned to AAG Pollak. He stated he wanted him to divorce himself from other work for the next several days and that he should supervise this case completely. The AG then turned to me and stated that he wanted Pollak to be kept advised of any communication, airtel, or cablegram that might come in in connection with this case. I told the AG that any facts which were pertinent would be furnished to the Department. The AG then indicated that the meeting was over.

I called Legal Attache [redacted] MINNICH upon my return to the office and informed him that he should proceed as planned; however, under no circumstances should he give the impression to Vinson or the Embassy that the FBI was injecting itself into extradition or deportation proceedings. [redacted] MINNICH properly replied that he had not thusfar injected himself and that as a matter of fact, following my call to him concerning Vinson coming over there, he had immediately informed Embassy officials that all proceedings pertaining to extradition or deportation would be strictly handled between Vinson, the American Embassy and the British Government. I told [redacted] MINNICH that he should be diplomatic but firm with Vinson and that under no circumstances should Vinson be allowed to push our personnel around. I also informed him that the AG had been told that he, [redacted] would be unable to meet Vinson inasmuch as he would be spending almost full time at Scotland Yard and at the jail.

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MINNICH
[redacted] was advised that Special Agents Bounds and Zeiss would arrive in London by military transportation at approximately 1:30 p. m., London time, Sunday, June 9, 1968. I stated that the Director had wanted these men to report to London on an expeditious basis in the event the British Government allowed proceedings to happen rapidly. [redacted] was told that these men would report to him upon their arrival. MINNICH

Specific instructions have been given to Special Agents Bounds and Zeiss as to how they are to handle themselves. They have been particularly advised concerning Vinson and his background.

ACTION: For record purposes.