

The Persecution And Assassination Of Martin Luther King Jr.

OPERATION ZORRO!

By Don Freed And The People's Information Project

"Operation Zorro — The Persecution and Assassination of Martin Luther King" is a soon-to-be released, in-depth report on the slaying of the late civil rights leader written by noted author-researcher Donald Freed and the People's Information Project. Following, **THE BLACK PANTHER** presents Part I of the chapter "Who Slew the Dreamer? A Speculation."

PART I

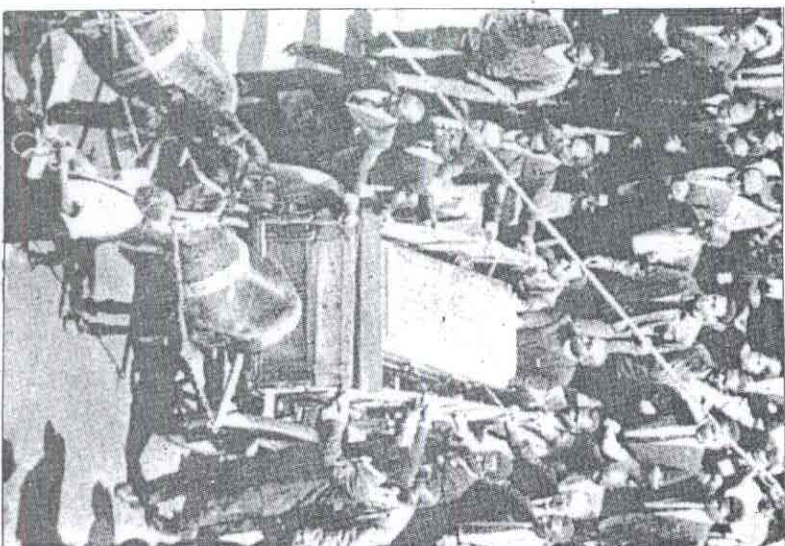
"This land which man has deswamped and denuded and derivered in two generations... where White men rent farms and live like niggers and niggers crop on shares and live like animals... no wonder the ruined woods don't cry for retribution! The people who have destroyed it will accomplish its revenge."

William Faulkner

At the Plaza Hotel, Jack Youngblood, the CIA mercenary, said that there were two dimensions in the King conspiracy, "rednecks on the ground" and, high behind the local types, the executive planners calling the shots. The only real question before the nation now is whether Martin Luther King was executed by a major or a minor conspiracy.

Youngblood had said, "Start with the rednecks on the ground."

Poor White Southerners have red necks because the sun beats down and burns them. And they wear wool hats because the cold wind would otherwise freeze them. The Rays —



The mule-drawn casket leads the funeral procession of Dr. Martin Luther King after his assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

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turned in on itself by economic interests that before the Civil War, for instance, caused to be printed and circulated millions of pseudo scientific books about Afro-American inferiority. These notorious propaganda works are current today in South Africa.

Only months after the death of Dr. King, important elements of the national media began to discuss, seriously, "new research" purporting to prove, once again, that Black people were genetically inferior, intellectually. (In 1976, the same media was constrained to report that the British studies on which this racial argument was based had been exposed as a fraud.)

Racism is fueled and perpetuated by an economic class that never needs to worry about where on a bus they will sit to ride to some dreary, back-breaking temporary job.

Over the decades, national leaders like Martin Luther King have arisen to confront this terrible human scandal. Their fate has always been the same — jail, character assassination, exile, death.

•The forerunner to the FBI, the old Bureau of Investigation, played the major role in the destruction of the peerless Black heavyweight champion, Jack Johnson, in the early years of this century. The Bureau and its allies were convinced that Johnson's physical and combative prowess would "set a bad example to the Negroes of the South, if they were to perceive that a Black man was more than the equal of a White man," to use the newspaper language

types, the executive planners calling the shots. The only real question before the nation now is whether Martin Luther King was executed by a major or a minor conspiracy. Youngblood had said, "Start with the rednecks on the ground."

Poor White Southerners have red necks because the sun beats down and burns them. And they wear wool hats because the cold wind would otherwise freeze them. The Rays — James Earl, Jerry, all of them — are and were poor Southern border state Whites. But they were more than just poor. They were casualties of America's secret class war: a part of the body count, victims of the psychological warfare and propaganda of power interests.



Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING

The mule-drawn casket leads the funeral procession of Dr. Martin Luther King after his assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

The Ray brothers and millions like them have been misled and set against themselves. The self-interest, the best interests of the Rays dictated that they should have marched on Washington, D.C., with Martin Luther King and his poor Black, Indian, Chicano and some White legions in the Poor People's March! Instead, the history of the American poor is one long convulsion of poor White violence against Black people. This violence is not spontaneous; the poor White shock troops are directed, controlled, and managed, as in any other way, by men of wealth and power.

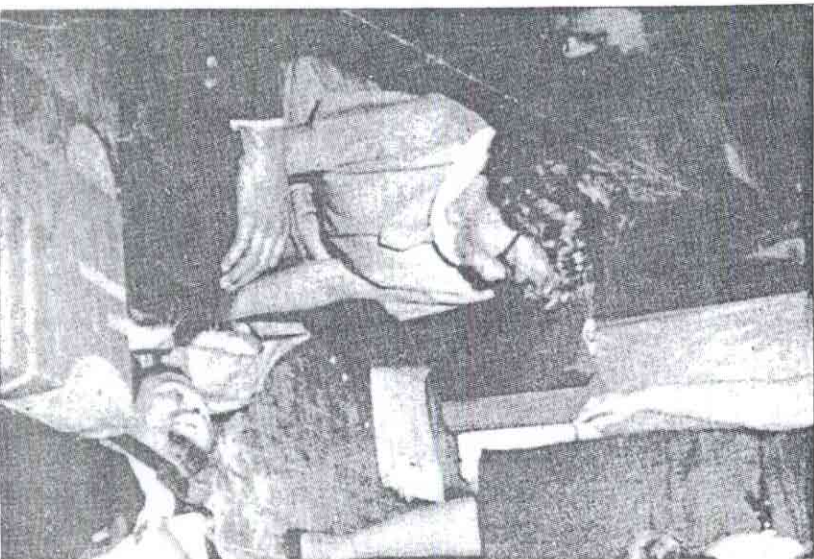
The lynching mania that tore apart the America of Reconstruction flowed directly from the entrance of millions of former slaves into the shrinking labor market of first the rural South and then the Northern urban centers. Documentation reveals that the Ku Klux Klan and other armed vigilante groups were financed and protected by large financial interests, North and South.

When Andrew Carnegie's miners went out on strike, the famous philanthropist, who endowed Black colleges, rushed in Black "scab" workers to man the mines, pitting them against Whites. As the union movement solidified, industrialists literally drove hundreds of thousands of rural Blacks into border and Northern city enclaves, ghettos, to provide pools of cheap labor. Henry Ford the First flooded the South with ads offering assembly line jobs at \$5 a day to poor Blacks. To this day in Detroit separate suburbs of Black and White workers are segregated and side by side in a state of constant, often violent tension.

There was a Populist movement in this country. It was split along race lines and

of Investigation, played the major role in the destruction of the peerless Black heavyweight champion, Jack Johnson, in the early years of this century. The Bureau and its allies were convinced that Johnson's physical and combative prowess would "set a bad example to the Negroes of the South, if they were to perceive that a Black man was more than the equal of a White man," to use the newspaper language of that day.

•The towering artist and athlete Paul Robeson was placed under virtual house arrest by the FBI after World War II, and his mighty



MALCOLM X lies on the floor of Harlem February 21, 1965. Kneeling over!

voice was stilled. His crime? Embracing socialism as opposed to American racism and the capitalism that he saw lying behind it.

•The supreme Black scholar of this century, Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, was driven into African exile in his declining years. As with Dr. King and Dr. Robeson, the charge was always communism. Communism and integration, communism and civil rights, communism and voter registration, communism and union organizing. Black and White unity equaled communism to American corporate interests and their federal police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation. To Hoover and his minions, Martin Luther King was another in a long line of insurrectionary Black reds.

•Until his death, Malcolm X's domestic political enemy number one to the intelligence establishment because he could, in the Director's words, "Electrify the Black masses." More importantly, Malcolm X had moved to a multiracial class perspective, poor Whites and Blacks together, as had every other martyred rights leader since old John Brown.

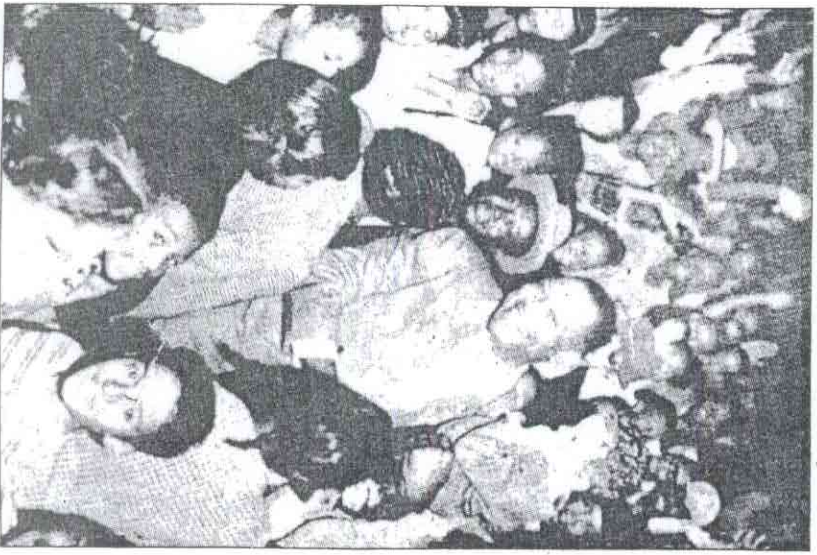
The evidence indicates that all major Western European intelligence services had been warned, by the CIA, to refuse entry to Malcolm because an assassination attempt was imminent. On the day of his assassination in Harlem, his security was stripped away. Inside the mosque Malcolm was gunned down. The body guard who bent over the dying leader to "assist" his labored breathing was Eugene Roberts, a Black undercover agent provocateur for the New York "Red Squad."

•The FBI covered up the murder of the three civil rights workers in Mississippi — carried out by police officers — until President Kennedy and his brother personally took charge of the investigation.

•According to an FBI informant, the Bureau had advance knowledge of the horrible bombing murder of the four little girls in the Birmingham church during an organizing drive inspired by the King movement in that

came South to work with Martin Luther King, she was murdered by a carload of White night riders. One of the men is a confessed FBI agent provocateur.

•The conspiracy that cut down the Southern civil rights organizer, Medgar Evers, involved extremist groups so heavily infiltrated by the FBI that the Bureau boasted over the years at



PAUL ROBESON, one of the greatest artists in U.S. history, was blacklisted due to his opposition to racism and capitalism.

every Congressional budget hearing that they were in control of these so-called "White Hate Groups."

•In Chicago when a Black-vaugh came

destruction of evidence just as in the murder of President Kennedy? What of the attempts at sexual blackmail — that continue to this hour — in order to disrupt the Congressional investigation into King's homicide?

Political assassination is as old as the state. The methods, too, are time-honored: people in high places use very ordinary men, indeed, as their instrument of execution; men who, often as not, are themselves victims of the existing system.

Who, really, did Martin Luther King threaten? Surely not the likes of James Earl Ray, enjoying love and life, perhaps for the first time, in Canada and Mexico. Ray, a man whose life by every objective criterion completely contradicts the profile of the lone and fanatical political assassin. What could be more hollow than this stale and stereotyped fanatic killer boiler plate — nurtured by the FBI and its allies as a motive for Lee Harvey Oswald after Dallas, and applied mechanically to James Earl Ray and Sirhan B. Sirhan to explain their "magnicides," to use another word coined by the media.

The question is elementary: There are and have been fanatics who have killed — and then proclaimed their responsibility and vindication by history. Lee Harvey Oswald, James Earl Ray and Sirhan Sirhan were charged and painted as, respectively, a lone communist fanatic; a lone racist fanatic; a lone Arabic fanatic. But none of these men bragged or trumpeted any megalomaniacal rhetoric as to why they had to slay famous men — for the "masses," or the "White race," or the "anti-Zionist" crusade. Instead, each proclaimed his innocence or manipulation by others. Thus, at one stroke every official book, report and study which explains the crimes as the result of fanatical and lonely zeal, is overturned by the refusal of the alleged assassins to speak the lines assigned to them in the FBI's scenario.

ML FBI Atlanta

Roberts, a Black undercover agent provocateur for the New York "Red Squad."

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•According to an FBI informant, the Bureau had advance knowledge of the horrible bombing murder of the four little girls in the Birmingham church during an organizing drive inspired by the King movement in that city.

•When a White union activist, Viola Liuzzo,



DuBon Hotel Ballroom after fatal shooting on his distraught wife BETTY SHABAZZ.

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•In Chicago, when a Black youth gang refused to be provoked into a fraticide against the Black Panther Party leadership, the FBI, working through the Chicago police and a paid agent provocateur, simply shot Panther deputy chairman Fred Hampton in cold blood.

The point of this bloody history of official complicity in violence against civil rights leaders is as terrible as it is simple. The question before a frightened nation is — did the Federal Bureau of Investigation conspire in the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

The evidence is damning. The FBI surveillance — photo and electronic — was all over Martin Luther King as late as April 3, yet we still do not know who or where the agents were at the time of his death. Why would they cover up for men the likes of James Earl Ray, who have no power at all?

Why was a major share of the homicide investigation put into the hands of the FBI's Atlanta "get King" squad? Agents who "jumped for joy" when the news of the murder was flashed? Agents who had highly placed informants and provocateurs in every extremist group in their region, this by their own repeated admission?

What entity had the power to cause Memphis Police Director and ex-FBI agent Frank Holloman to virtually strip King of his last remaining security?

Why the revealed collusion of the FBI with friendly journalists and authors in the propagation of the "lone nut" theory of Dr. King's death? And why the withholding of and

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The FBI admits to conspiring without letup to destroy Dr. Martin Luther King's marriage, his movement, his character. Did they destroy his life, too, or simply let the killing unfold, help it along? **TO BE CONTINUED**



The great Black scholar W.E.B. DuBOIS, who was forced into an African exile by U.S. reactionaries.