

Memorandum

TO : SAC, Memphis (44-1987)

DATE: 4/4/68

FROM : SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE

SUBJECT: UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM
CIVIL RIGHTS

OO: Memphis

At approximately 10:15 PM the night of April 4, 1968, [redacted] called the writer, SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE, and stated he hesitated to furnish the name of the following suspect but due to the nature of the crime felt constrained to do so. He explained that [redacted]

RENFRO TURNER HAYS,
HAYS, [redacted]

[redacted] insisted on being informed as to the Memphis residence of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., which at the time was the Lorraine Motel, 406 Mulberry [redacted]

HAYS has recently been driving a late model white automobile, make and model unknown, and was last known to be living in a little white clapboard house just east of North Watkins, one or two blocks south of Jackson Avenue (this would probably be Faxon or Tutwiler). He lives with an older woman who is his landlady and has a private room in the front of the house.

Informant recalled that HAYS is a schizophrenic and has been in and out of mental institutions in West Tennessee for

2 - ME 44-1987

1 - [redacted]

1 - ME 157-1092 (Sanitation Workers Strike, Memphis, Tenn.)

1 - [redacted]

WHL:ME

(5)



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44-1987-Sub-16

SEARCHED.....	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED <i>llh</i>	FILED <i>llh</i>
APR 4 1968	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

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ME# 44-1897

several years. While HAYS is not known to be anti-Negro, due to his mental quirks and due to the fact he has been private detective for years, engaging in all types of nefarious and questionable schemes, informant feels that HAYS would be capable of an assassination either through personal compulsion or for hire. He stated that of particular significance is the fact that HAYS is an avid student of all facets surrounding the assassination of the late President JOHN F. KENNEDY, having read numerous books and writings relative thereto, and can espound for hours on all possible ramifications of that assassination.

A review of Memphis file [REDACTED] reveals that HAYS as recently as 1966 attempted to join the Haywood, Tennessee Klavern, United Klans of America [REDACTED]

HAYS in 1966 did volunteer information to this office concerning this activity but due to his previous mental history, efforts were not made to develop him as an informant. At that time HAYS seemed to have a considerable knowledge of firearms and furnished some information to this office to this effect concerning possible guns owned allegedly by some of the Klan members in Haywood County.

[REDACTED] discloses that HAYS was arrested on a peace warrant by the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, June 28, 1960, Shelby Co. SO [REDACTED] FBI [REDACTED]. At that time he was described as 6 ft. tall, weighed 183 lbs., born December 26, 1927, Crawfordsville, Arkansas, brown eyes, black hair, medium complexion.

He was arrested by the Memphis PD, September 5, 1950, Memphis PD# [REDACTED] on a charge of threatened breach of peace. At that time he was described as 6 ft. 1/2", 191 lbs. His father is R. W. RENFRO (deceased); mother, CORA HAYS, Norman St., Memphis, Tenn. He has fingerprint classification:

12-17-60 W MII 16
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ME# 44-1897

Photographs of HAYS, are in the 1-A section of [REDACTED] taken by the PD and SO, respectively.

In furnishing any of this information to the Memphis PD, all due caution is to be taken to protect the identity of informant.

The writer immediately furnished this information to SA CYRIL F. BUSCH, who was at the Homicide Bureau of the Memphis PD. SA BUSCH stated he would converse with Inspector N. E. ZACHARY or one of his men and check to determine whether or not HAYS has a private detective license which would give any up-to-date address or photograph.

BUSCH was also reminded, based on information from Informant, that HAYS has also done considerable investigative work for [REDACTED]

- L E A D -

THE MEMPHIS DIVISION:

AT MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Will follow up on all logical investigation regarding RENFRO TURNER HAYS as a suspect.

Recommend this lead be assigned SA BUSCH.