

V. WILSON'S ALLEGATIONS

A. Introduction

In March 1998, Donald Wilson, a former FBI agent, publicly announced that for 30 years he had concealed documents he said he took from James Earl Ray's abandoned Mustang in 1968. Immediately before this public announcement, Wilson met in Atlanta with Paul Howard, the District Attorney for Fulton County, Georgia. Wilson told Howard that on April 11, 1968, he went to the scene in Atlanta where Ray's Mustang had been found. Once there, he opened the car door and a small envelope containing several pieces of paper fell to the ground. Wilson claimed he took the documents -- two pieces of paper with handwritten notations and two business cards -- hid them, and told no one about them for 30 years. He also reported that he no longer possessed all the documents he took from Ray's car.

In September 1998, Wilson met with attorneys from our investigative team. He changed his account and for the first time claimed that he actually took five documents from Ray's car -- the four described above and an additional fifth piece of paper with the telephone number of the FBI Atlanta field office written on it. He did not offer an explanation for not disclosing the existence of this new document when he initially made his public disclosure to the King family and Dr. Pepper, the District Attorney in Atlanta, and the media.

During our meeting, Wilson refused to provide the original documents he said he took from Ray's car. Rather, he gave us two original documents the following day, only after he learned that a search warrant for them was about to be executed. One document was a torn page from a 1963 Dallas, Texas telephone directory that refers to figures associated with the assassination of President Kennedy, along with the name "Raul." The other was a piece of paper with handwritten figures and words, including the name "Raul." See Attachment 1.

We considered a variety of factors in assessing the credibility of Wilson's claim and the authenticity of these documents. First, we evaluated whether Wilson's statements about the documents to the King family, Dr. Pepper, the District Attorney, the media, and our investigation have been consistent. We also analyzed whether independent evidence exists to support the accuracy of Wilson's claims. In that regard, we reviewed original law enforcement records and attempted to interview all law enforcement and civilian witnesses who were present at the scene when Ray's car was discovered or who had information about the Mustang. We also assessed the overall plausibility of Wilson's claims, including whether it was likely that a law enforcement officer would steal and then hide potential evidence regarding Dr. King's assassination for 30 years and, when finally disclosing it, continue to conceal the existence of a potentially crucial piece of evidence.

We further analyzed the two original documents obtained from Wilson. In an attempt to resolve the central issues related to the authenticity of the papers -- whether they came from Ray's Mustang in 1968 and who authored them -- we had the United States Secret Service (USSS) laboratory scientifically analyze the documents and the handwritten notations on them.

Further, we considered James Earl Ray's failure to recall the documents and the likelihood that he would have possessed a torn page from a 1963 Dallas telephone directory with notations that suggest a connection between the assassinations of Dr. King and President Kennedy.

Finally, we assessed Wilson's conduct since publicly disclosing the existence of the documents. We considered Wilson's failure to provide the Department of Justice the documents until execution of a search warrant was imminent, while calling for the Attorney General to conduct a thorough investigation and showing the papers to the media. We also assessed Wilson's failure to provide the information he claimed might lead to the recovery of the documents purportedly stolen by someone who later worked in the White House. Furthermore, we considered the fact that Wilson terminated all communication with us immediately after we responded to his concerns that he might be prosecuted by offering him immunity in exchange for his cooperation.

B. The Origin Of The Allegations

1. April 1968: The Discovery of Ray's Mustang

On April 11, 1968, residents of a public housing project alerted the Atlanta Police Department to an abandoned, white Ford Mustang in the project's parking lot. Two police detectives responded and found the Mustang locked. They unlocked the driver-side door with a coat hanger to obtain the vehicle's identification number. A records search revealed the car was registered to Eric Galt, an alias used by James Earl Ray.

The FBI was notified and arrived on the scene approximately two hours after the Atlanta police detectives. Federal agents arranged for the Mustang to be towed to a government garage where it was searched and processed for evidence.

On April 11, 1968, Donald Wilson was a new FBI agent assigned to the Atlanta field office. Records reflect that he had been an agent for less than a year and on that date was assigned, along with three other agents, to search for Western Union money orders relevant to the murder of Dr. King.

According to Wilson, he joined the FBI in part because of his concern with the racism he observed while attending college and law school in the South during the 1960s. He believed the FBI would provide him an opportunity to protect civil rights. Shortly after becoming an agent, however, Wilson became disillusioned, concluding that the FBI had racist policies and little regard for individual liberties.

Wilson nonetheless had a successful career with the FBI for ten years, receiving several promotions and awards. He abruptly resigned in 1977, on the same day he gave written notice. Notes from an exit interview reflect that Wilson stated that he left "because of personal values and career objectives" and refused to "elaborate further."

After leaving the FBI, Wilson established several small businesses, all of which failed. His most recent business dissolved in 1998. At the time he made his allegations, he was a teacher in a community high school and still professed a deep and continuing commitment to civil rights.

2. March 1998: Wilson's Public Disclosure

On March 24, 1998, nearly 30 years after the assassination, District Attorney Paul Howard of Fulton County, Georgia, met with Wilson in Atlanta at the request of Dr. King's son, Dexter King, and Ambassador Andrew Young.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Howard interviewed Wilson, who was accompanied by Dr. Pepper, about his alleged recovery of the documents from Ray's car.

Wilson told Howard that late on the afternoon of April 11, 1968, a senior FBI agent, who he thought might have been Don Tackitt, now deceased, drove him to the scene where Ray's car had been discovered. Wilson said that when they arrived, he saw two uniformed Atlanta police officers and perhaps as many as two other FBI agents. According to Wilson, the two uniformed officers were "arguing and debating" about who should open the car first. The debate continued about who was "going to open the back door, whose [sic] going to open the front door."

Wilson told Howard that he thought the officers' discussion was "silly." Noticing that the doors of the Mustang were unlocked, he opened a door and an envelope the size of a "child's valentine" fell to the ground. Wilson claimed that because he immediately realized he had "done something wrong," he quickly put his foot on the envelope and stuffed it in his pocket to hide it from the others. Wilson also said that Ray's car was "filthy," "untidy," and filled "with trash and papers."

Wilson further told Howard that he did not look at the contents of the envelope until that night, when he was home alone in his bathroom. Inside he found four pieces of paper -- the two documents that our investigation ultimately obtained, as well as "a business card from a Dallas, Texas gunship [sic]" and "a business card for a Baton Rouge, Louisiana towing company."

According to Wilson, nothing "struck [him] of significance" when he initially viewed the documents. Rather, it was not until 25 years later, when he viewed the televised HBO mock trial of James Earl Ray in 1993, that he heard about Raoul and recognized the potential import of the documents. He explained, "[w]hen I watched [the show] * * * this issue of Raoul came up * * * [and] [t]he bell went off. * * * I said well, darn it. * * * I had a paper that has his name on it. It may well be significant."

During the interview, Wilson also stated that he was eager to deliver the original documents personally to the Attorney General for appropriate investigation. He unequivocally stated that he wanted the Department of Justice, not the FBI, to conduct the inquiry. According to Wilson, the FBI was a racist, untrustworthy organization that would perceive his disclosure as a "declaration of war against th[e] organization." Thus, he predicted that the FBI would seek to "destroy [his] credibility" once it heard about the documents.

During the meeting with Howard, Wilson also reported that in 1968, around the same time as the recovery of Ray's car, he assisted with an FBI "black bag" search (an unauthorized entry by law enforcement) of the rooming house where Ray had stayed the week prior to Dr. King's assassination. Wilson told Howard that he waited outside while other agents searched Ray's room. He claimed that one of the agents gave him a large envelope containing materials removed from the room, which he personally delivered to an Assistant Director of the FBI.

At the conclusion of the interview, Wilson gave Howard copies of the only two documents he allegedly still possessed and reported that the originals were in a bank safe deposit box. He also explained that the other two documents he had allegedly taken from Ray's car, the two business cards, had been "lost I guess."

Immediately following the interview, Wilson appeared at a press conference with Dr. Pepper, who spoke to the media. On March 26, 1998, two days after meeting with the District Attorney, Wilson telephoned the Public Affairs Office of the Department of Justice and stated that he was prepared to release the documents to the Attorney General for a full investigation. He also mentioned to the Department of Justice official that the

FBI, as he had predicted to Howard, was publicly criticizing him about disclosure of the documents.⁽⁴⁹⁾

One week later, Wilson withdrew his offer to release the documents to the Department of Justice. He told a Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division, who was returning his initial call, that he no longer was willing to release the documents because the FBI publicly criticized him. Before advising the Department of Justice of his decision, however, Wilson publicly reneged on his offer in a speech to the Coalition of Political Assassinations, a private, Washington-based group interested in conspiracy theories.

Over the next several months, Wilson spoke to several members of the media about the documents. His accounts about his recovery of the documents were essentially the same as what he told Howard.

3. September 1998: Wilson's Meeting with Our Investigative Team

In September 1998, our investigative team contacted Wilson, assured him that the FBI had no part in our inquiry, and requested a meeting.⁽⁵⁰⁾ He agreed.

On September 16, 1998, Wilson met with two attorneys from our investigative team at a prearranged location he selected near his home in Chicago. He unexpectedly took our attorneys to a bank where he claimed to be storing the documents. Once there, he refused to show us the original documents when he learned that we had posted a United States Marshal at the bank.⁽⁵¹⁾ Wilson acknowledged that he understood that the cautionary measure was in deference to the extreme importance of the evidence. Nonetheless, during the nearly four-hour meeting, he repeatedly refused to display the original documents, declined to commit to their disclosure in the future, and only provided copies of two of the documents.

That afternoon, the investigative team obtained a search warrant for Wilson's bank safe deposit box based on his representations that the original documents were there, his refusal to release them, and his failure to provide assurances that he ultimately would. That evening, an attorney with our investigation telephoned Wilson and told him that a search warrant had been issued.

Early the next morning, Wilson telephoned an inspector with our investigative team and agreed to turn over the documents to avoid execution of the search warrant. A few hours later, Wilson met with the inspector and gave her two documents he allegedly took from Ray's car -- a torn page from a 1963 Dallas, Texas telephone directory and a piece of paper with handwritten numbers and words.

C. Analysis Of Wilson's Contradictory Statements

Wilson's statements about the documents have been materially inconsistent.

1. Belated Revelation of an Additional Document

Since March 1998, Wilson has spoken to the King family and Dr. Pepper, the media, the District Attorney, and our attorneys about the documents. In all of his statements until his meeting with members of our investigative team in September 1998, Wilson claimed that he took four documents from Ray's car -- the two original documents we obtained and the two business cards he described as "lost I guess."

When Wilson met with attorneys from our investigative team, he divulged new and inconsistent information about the existence of an additional document he supposedly took from Ray's car. Six months after publicly disclosing the existence of the documents, he revealed that he had been withholding the fact that he had actually found a fifth document. He now claimed that he had taken not only the four documents already described (see Sections V.A. and V.B.2., above), but also a fifth piece of paper with the telephone number of the FBI field office in Atlanta where he worked at that time.

Sometime after the meeting with our attorneys, Wilson publicly acknowledged that he had purportedly taken an additional document from Ray's car. In an article published in *The Atlanta Constitution* on March 19, 1999, Wilson confirmed that he had taken the paper with the FBI Atlanta field office telephone number.

2. When and Where Wilson Allegedly Viewed the Documents and Recognized Their Significance

During the meeting with members of our investigative team in September 1998, Wilson relied on the existence of the "new" document to change his account as to when he initially viewed the documents and recognized their significance. Contradicting his March 1998 claim to Howard that he did not look at the documents until he "got home that night [and] went into [his] bathroom," he reported to our attorneys that he examined the documents on the scene, moving out of sight of the other law enforcement officers. In addition, Wilson contradicted his earlier statement that he did not recognize the significance of the documents for 25 years, until 1993, when he viewed the televised HBO mock trial. Instead, he told our attorneys that he immediately knew the documents were important when he saw the telephone number of the FBI Atlanta field office where he worked.

3. Alleged Reason for Concealing the Documents

When speaking to our investigative team, Wilson also changed his explanation for concealing the envelope and its contents. In his initial statements, he said that he initially hid the documents because he feared the consequence of his conduct on his employment. He told Howard that upon opening the car door, "there was an immediate feeling of fear in my stomach [that] I had done something wrong." "It [was] really my attention [sic] * * * not to disturb anything or touch anything." He further explained, "[e]ar[ly] on in my career when I was younger I had a wife; I had three little children. I simply could not afford to take the risk."

Wilson also told Howard that he concealed the documents for 30 years because of his general distrust of the FBI. According to Wilson, the FBI was filled with people who were "racist, corrupt and liars." He also explained that "historical events took place" that made it impossible for him to disclose the documents. Wilson stated, "they threw out Nixon, the Attorney General went to jail and people lied and everyone was a crook and it was a question, who could I trust, who could I really go to and trust. I had my family to consider, so I did nothing with it."

Wilson gave our attorneys a different rationale for hiding the documents. Wilson explained that he withheld them because of his discovery of the paper with the telephone number of the FBI field office and his specific belief that it demonstrated a connection between Ray and the FBI. Relying explicitly on the "new" document, Wilson claimed he had no choice but to hide the documents and withhold any information about their discovery because it appeared from the additional paper that the FBI was Ray's accomplice.

4. Alleged Disappearance of Certain Documents

When Wilson met with District Attorney Howard, he reported that he no longer had two of the four documents he had allegedly retrieved from Ray's Mustang. He said that the business cards from an unnamed Dallas, Texas gun shop and an unnamed Baton Rouge Louisiana towing company had been lost. Specifically, without providing any further details or suggesting that the documents had been stolen, he commented, "they call them lost I guess."

Wilson gave a different explanation about the disappearance of the business cards when he spoke to our attorneys. He never told us that the cards had been lost. Rather, he claimed that they had been stolen from him in 1988 by someone who later worked in the White House, whom he would not identify. He also advised that he had information that might lead to the recovery of the documents, but refused to provide it.

5. Alleged Location of the Documents

Wilson also provided information regarding the location of certain documents, then later denied making the statements. On September 16, 1998, during our meeting in his bank's conference room, Wilson advised that the original documents were stored in his bank safe deposit box. At one point, as he was leaving the meeting to make copies of the documents, he even explained that he needed the keys to his safe deposit box. Afterwards, Wilson returned to the meeting with photocopies of two of the documents -- the partial page from the Dallas telephone directory and the piece of paper with handwritten words and numbers.

Our attorneys then requested a duplicate of the additional document that allegedly had the telephone number of the FBI Atlanta field office. Wilson refused to provide a copy. He nonetheless was careful to explain that the original of that document was in the same safe deposit box, along with the two originals he had just copied.

The next morning, Wilson called an inspector with our investigative team to avoid execution of the search warrant. After agreeing and making arrangements to turn over the original documents, he contradicted his statement the day before that the documents were in his safe deposit box. Rather, he claimed at this point that the original documents were not at the bank and had not been kept there for some period of time.

Later that morning, Wilson met with the inspector to turn over the documents. He provided the original two documents he had claimed to have photocopied the day before. When asked about the newly identified document with the telephone number of the FBI field office and the fact that the day before he had said that it, too, was in his safe deposit box, Wilson denied making the statement and insisted that he had been misunderstood. Again, contradicting what he had actually said at the bank the day before, Wilson claimed that he had instead told our attorneys the fifth document was taken when the two other documents had been stolen.

6. Conclusions about Wilson's Contradictory Statements

Wilson's statements about the documents are inconsistent, and we are uncertain which statements, if any, are accurate. It is nonetheless clear that he has provided false information. It cannot simultaneously be true, as Wilson has alternately claimed, that he: (1) took both four and five documents from Ray's car; (2) did not realize the significance of the documents for 25 years and was aware of their importance when he found them; (3) initially reviewed the documents at the scene and first viewed them at home later that

evening; (4) had the original documents in his bank safe deposit box for several months and did not have them at that location during the same time frame; and (5) had the original document with the telephone number of the FBI field office in his safe deposit at his bank in September 1998, and had it stolen from his office in 1988. Accordingly, Wilson has been untruthful either in his initial statements to the King family and Dr. Pepper, the District Attorney, and the media or in his subsequent accounts to our investigative team and the media.

Most significantly, Wilson has been inconsistent about allegedly finding an additional document in Ray's car. Assuming Wilson was truthful when he belatedly revealed the existence of a new document with the FBI telephone number, he was unquestionably less than forthright when he initially spoke with the King family and Dr. Pepper, Howard, and the news media. In addition, there appears to be no reasonable explanation for Wilson's lack of candor in his first public statements about the documents. A person genuinely interested in an accurate, complete, and honest disclosure of information after 30 years of concealment does not withhold some of the evidence, particularly that portion which is potentially most significant. Consequently, Wilson's belated revelation, even if true, raises serious questions about the credibility of his other comments about the documents, including where he got them.

If, on the other hand, Wilson's assertion about a fifth document is untrue, his veracity is equally suspect. Wilson may claim that he fabricated to retaliate against the FBI for impugning his integrity or to persuade others that he had a valid reason for withholding the documents. Even so, neither of the rationalizations changes the fact that Wilson made a false statement or demonstrates that he should be believed. Regardless of his motives and the truth of his belated revelation, Wilson has misled the public, the King family, and the federal government. Consequently, his revelation about a fifth document raises serious questions about the believability of his account.

The extent and context of Wilson's untruths are also troublesome. Significantly, Wilson's belated revelation of a new document is not an isolated false statement. In fact, during the meeting with our attorneys, Wilson relied on the additional document to weave an intricate, new story about what he purportedly did at the scene, when he allegedly looked at the documents, and why he supposedly hid them for 30 years.

Wilson's contradictory statements also defy his public persona that he is genuinely interested in a thorough investigation designed to disclose the truth about the documents. In fact, within less than 24 hours, Wilson not only claimed to our investigation that the additional document was both in his safe deposit box and had been stolen from his office in 1988, but also that he never made the former claim.

Finally, while Wilson's contradictory claims suggest that his accounts should not be credited without independent, substantiating evidence, his most recent explanation for the disappearance of the documents seems particularly suspicious. On its face, Wilson's allegation that certain documents were stolen in an office burglary by someone who later worked at the White House is conspicuously sensational. Its implausibility is heightened by his refusal to provide specific information he claims to have about "leads" that may result in recovery of the documents. He also has failed to supply any documentation to substantiate the alleged burglary. Moreover, if his earlier claim to Howard that he told no one about the documents for 30 years were true, it would have been impossible for anyone to have known to steal them.

D. Analysis Of The Evidence

Wilson alleges that he was present at the scene of the discovery of Ray's Mustang,

opened a door, and concealed documents that fell from inside. He further claims that several days later, he participated in an unauthorized search of Ray's rooming house by carrying evidence from that search to the FBI office.

Our investigative team interviewed witnesses who were present at the discovery of the Mustang, its subsequent search, and the search of Ray's room. We also reviewed all relevant reports, records, and other documents.⁽⁵²⁾ We discovered no independent evidence to corroborate Wilson's claim that he took documents from Ray's abandoned car or participated in a search of Ray's room. In fact, we found substantial, reliable evidence that contradicts both assertions.

1. Wilson's Alleged Presence at Ray's Car

Our investigation found no documentation verifying Wilson's claim that he was at the scene when Ray's car was recovered. Official records reflect that on April 11, 1968, Wilson was assigned to review copies of money orders at a Western Union office in Atlanta as a part of the King murder investigation. Because those records do not reflect the hours Wilson worked or exclude the possibility of Wilson's presence at the scene after he completed his assignment, they are inconclusive as to whether he was actually there.

Other evidence suggests, however, that Wilson was not at the scene. The FBI took several photographs of the Mustang at its recovery site that depict the presence of several FBI agents. None show Wilson.

The investigative team also questioned civilians and law enforcement personnel known to have been at the scene when Ray's car was recovered and showed them a 1967 photograph of Wilson. No witness recalled seeing Wilson at the scene. Nor did any FBI agent recall driving with Wilson to the Mustang. In fact, most FBI agents did not recall Wilson at all, even when shown his picture.

2. Wilson's Alleged Taking of Documents from Ray's Car

Wilson told District Attorney Howard that he opened the Mustang's door while other law enforcement officers were not watching, and then concealed a small envelope containing papers that fell from the car. Although he did not specify to Howard which door he opened, he told a reporter from the *Chicago Tribune* in April 1998 that "he noticed the Mustang's passenger door ajar. He pulled out a handkerchief, * * * [and] opened the door" (emphasis added). We found no evidence to corroborate Wilson's allegation that he opened the door of Ray's Mustang and actually discovered documents that fell from it.

Records show that R.L. Davis and P.S. McCravy, detectives from the Auto Theft Squad of the Atlanta Police Department who are now deceased, arrived on the scene around 2:00 p.m and opened and unlocked the driver-side door of the Mustang using a coat hanger. The FBI was not notified about the location of Ray's car until after these detectives unlocked and opened the driver-side door, obtained the car's identification number, relayed that information for several vehicle registration checks, and were able to verify that the car belonged to Eric Galt (Ray's alias). As a result, no federal agents arrived until at least 4:00 p.m., approximately two hours after the driver-side door of the Mustang had been opened.

No civilian or law enforcement witness interviewed by our investigative team recalled or reported seeing anyone at the scene open a car door after the detectives' initial entry. In fact, two different FBI agents recalled being dispatched with specific instructions to

secure the crime scene and to ensure no one touched the car.

3. Wilson's Claims about the Doors of Ray's Car

No witness recalled or reported seeing one of the doors of the Mustang ajar.⁽⁵³⁾ Rather, historical documents and witness interviews establish that Ray's car was locked when the Atlanta detectives arrived at the scene.

Official reports suggest that the passenger-side door of Ray's Mustang -- the door Wilson claimed to have opened -- remained locked the entire time the car was at the scene. Law enforcement reports specifically note that Atlanta detectives unlocked the driver-side door. They do not make reference to the passenger-side door other than to say that the car was locked. Since the purpose of entering the Mustang was to obtain the vehicle identification number (VIN) located inside the driver-side door, there would have been no reason to unlock that door with a coat hanger if the passenger-side door was ajar and unlocked. Further, once the detectives obtained the Mustang's VIN, there would have been no purpose unlocking the passenger-side door. Thus, reliable evidence indicates that the passenger-side door was locked and never opened.

Moreover, photographs taken at the scene record the condition of the Mustang's doors when FBI agents were present. At our request, Ford Motor Company analyzed these photographs and concluded that both doors were closed, not ajar, and, further, that the passenger-side door was locked.

If the car had been photographed before Wilson's arrival, the pictures conclusively demonstrate that neither door was ajar, as Wilson has alleged, and that the passenger-side door was locked, preventing Wilson from opening it, as he has claimed.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Even assuming the photographs were taken after Wilson allegedly opened the door and retrieved the documents, it is still significant that the passenger-side door is pictured as locked. After all, Wilson, in his purported haste to hide the documents and go undetected, would have had no reason or time to lock the door after allegedly finding it unlocked, opening it, picking up the documents, and concealing them. In fact, since he admittedly did not want his tampering to be discovered by other law enforcement officers at the scene, he presumably would not have locked a door that he had originally found open. In any event, Wilson has never claimed that he locked the door after retrieving the documents, even though he initially explained in detail how he carefully opened the door with a handkerchief.

4. Wilson's Purported Reason for Opening Ray's Car Door

Wilson told District Attorney Howard that when he arrived at the scene, he "met a couple of Atlanta Police officers * * * [in] uniform[], * * * [who were] arguing and debating about * * * whose [sic] going to open the door [of the Mustang] first * * * who was going to open the back door, whose [sic] going to open the front door."

Wilson's explanation as to why he opened Ray's car door is uncorroborated and contradicted by the evidence. Photographs of the scene do not show any officers in uniform. The two detectives who unlocked the Mustang were plainclothes detectives. Moreover, because they unlocked the driver-side door at least two hours before any FBI agents arrived, no FBI agent, including Wilson, would have been there to witness an exchange, even assuming it occurred. Nor would officers at the scene have been arguing whether to open the Mustang's back or front door, as Wilson claims, since the 1966 Mustang was a two-door car.

In addition, no law enforcement officers or civilian witnesses recall or reported seeing uniformed police officers arguing about whether to open the Mustang. We interviewed Ralph Norton and Jessie Summey, the two plainclothes detectives who relieved the detectives who originally unlocked the car. They reported arriving at the scene well before any FBI agents and remaining there until the car was towed. Neither recalled any uniformed officers at the scene or an argument or debate of any kind. Moreover, no other witness, except a then 13-year-old boy, recalled seeing an argument between law enforcement officials.⁽⁵⁵⁾

5. Wilson's Claim regarding the Interior of Ray's Car

In his interview with the District Attorney, Wilson described the car as "filthy inside * * * [with] trash and paper, and the ashtray was overflowing with cigarettes. It was, it was just very untidy." Likewise, in September 1998, Wilson told our attorneys that the inside of Ray's car was messy and very cluttered.

The investigative team could not resolve with certainty the condition of the inside of the Mustang. There are conflicting accounts and records.

Official reports from 1968 reflect that the interior of the vehicle was relatively neat, contained very few items, and had no visible "trash." Documents and photographs, which include a detailed, itemized inventory of the Mustang's contents, provide that the only paper found in the Mustang's interior were "scraps from under the rear seat" and "glove compartment" retrieved during a thorough search after the car was impounded and transported to a government garage.

Some law enforcement personnel and civilians also contradicted Wilson's account and confirmed that the interior of the Mustang was not filled with trash or paper. For example, FBI Agent Carl Claiborne, who spent five or six hours searching, processing, and inventorying the Mustang at the garage, told our investigation that the car's interior was "pretty clean, not junky." Civilian witnesses also describe the Mustang's interior as relatively tidy. On the other hand, two witnesses, who were pre-teens at the time, and one former FBI supervisor, now in his 80s, recalled the interior to have been "trashy," "full of junk," or looking "as if someone lived in it."⁽⁵⁶⁾ Most witnesses, however, had no recollection of the Mustang's condition, suggesting there may not have been anything remarkable about its interior.

No witness whom we interviewed or whose previous statement we reviewed recalled seeing the ashtray overflowing with cigarettes, as Wilson claims. In fact, most witnesses did not recall anything about the ashtray. A 13-year-old boy (see footnotes 53 and 55 above) recalled only a cigar butt in the ashtray, and he and his mother remembered cigarette or cigar ashes on the floor of the automobile. In addition, former agent Claiborne "was fairly certain" he saw a couple of cigarette butts in the ashtray when he searched the car, but the inventory of evidence records nothing about the ashtray.⁽⁵⁷⁾

Even assuming Wilson accurately described the Mustang's condition, his description is not probative of whether he was at the scene, opened the car, or took documents from it. Wilson had the opportunity to learn about the car's condition elsewhere. In fact, he told our investigation that he saw the Mustang at the garage where it was impounded. He also could have acquired information about the Mustang's condition from other accounts that were in the public domain before he made his revelation. For example, in the 1995 book, *Orders to Kill*, Dr. Pepper reported that an unnamed witness described the ashtray using the exact same word as Wilson -- "overflowing." Accordingly, even if the

contradictory accounts relating to the condition of the Mustang's interior were reconciled, it would not resolve whether Wilson's claims are true.

6. Wilson's Claim that He Participated in the Search of Ray's Room

Wilson also claims to have participated in another aspect of the FBI's investigation of the assassination. He told both District Attorney Howard and our attorneys in March and September 1998, respectively, that he was involved in a "black bag" burglary⁽⁵⁸⁾ of the room James Earl Ray had rented in Atlanta shortly before the assassination. He said that he acted as a courier for the undercover FBI agents who conducted the search and delivered to an Assistant Director of the FBI a large envelope containing materials taken from Ray's room.

Information from FBI records and interviews of agents reflect that the FBI conducted a surreptitious search of Ray's room in Atlanta nearly two weeks after the murder. At the time, Ray, then known as Eric Galt, had been identified as a suspect. Nothing corroborates Wilson's claim that he was involved. Both agents who participated in the search unequivocally told our investigative team that Wilson had no part in the "black bag" job and one specifically recalls delivering the fruits of the search to the FBI field office himself. Since each has admitted participation in the unauthorized activity, neither has a motive to deny Wilson's involvement. Nor would it have been unusual for Wilson to have learned of the activity from office gossip afterwards.

During our investigation, several former agents also reported that the FBI did not have agents with less than a year of experience participate in potentially sensitive operations like a "black bag" job of Ray's room. Indeed, the two agents involved in the search were both experienced agents. Thus, even if a courier had been required -- which was not the case according to the undercover agent who actually found and transported the evidence -- an experienced, reliable agent, not Wilson, most probably would have been chosen.

7. Conclusions regarding the Evidence

We found no evidence to support Wilson's accounts that he either took documents from Ray's car or participated in a search of Ray's room. Accordingly, his claims about his participation in the investigation of Dr. King's assassination remain unsubstantiated.

In addition, we found substantial, independent evidence to contradict important aspects of Wilson's claims. First, we found reliable evidence to contradict Wilson's allegation that the passenger-side door was ajar or unlocked. Documents, photographs, eyewitness accounts, and expert opinion uniformly establish that neither door was ajar and that the passenger-side door was locked when FBI agents were on the scene. In addition, had the passenger-side door been ajar as Wilson claims, Atlanta police detectives would not have reported finding the car locked and used a coat hanger to unlock the driver-side door.

We also found substantial evidence to contradict Wilson's claim that he opened the Mustang because uniformed officers were debating whether to open the car. Our investigation revealed that all of the Atlanta detectives at the scene, including the two who initially unlocked the Mustang, were in plainclothes. Moreover, we found no reliable evidence to suggest that there was a disagreement between uniformed officers at the scene about unlocking the car. Even if there were one, any such discussion would have occurred long before any FBI agents arrived.

Furthermore, the contradictory evidence regarding the condition of the Mustang's interior does not corroborate Wilson's claims that he was at the scene, opened the door, or took

the documents. Because Wilson could have learned about the condition of the car without being at the scene, his description does not shed light on the truthfulness of his account. In addition, although we could not definitively resolve whether Wilson was at the scene, his failure to appear in any photographs, which depict several other agents and local police officers, suggests that he was not.

Wilson's allegation that he participated in the "black bag" job of Ray's room is likewise unsubstantiated and contradicted by the agents who actually participated. It thus casts further doubt on Wilson's credibility and suggests that he may have aspired to having had greater involvement in the FBI's investigation of the King assassination than he actually had.

On balance, the evidence makes it substantially more likely that Wilson's claim that he took documents from Ray's car is false. Wilson's allegations that he took evidence from Ray's car and participated in a search of his room both remain uncorroborated and are contradicted by reliable information. In fact, important aspects of his accounts cannot be reasonably squared with well-documented information from several sources. Consequently, while the evidence does not make it impossible that Wilson's claims are true, it strongly indicates that they are not.

E. Implausibilities In Wilson's Account

It is impossible to determine with absolute certainty the truth of certain details of Wilson's varied accounts. Aspects of his version of events nonetheless seem so improbable as to be unbelievable.

1. Wilson's Purported Motive for Tampering with Ray's Car

Wilson told the District Attorney that he opened the Mustang's door because the police were arguing and he thought it "was silly" that "no one [had] open[ed] the door." This explanation is unconvincing in light of Wilson's training, the significance of the Mustang, his purported commitment to civil rights, and the fact that he was a new agent not assigned to the crime scene.

When Wilson allegedly went to the scene, he was fresh from the FBI's academy, having just received extensive instruction in criminal investigative techniques. Thus, consistent with the most fundamental of training policies, he would have been schooled not to contaminate, tamper with, or unnecessarily touch a crime scene. Even when speaking to District Attorney Howard about the documents, Wilson acknowledged that such practices "go [] to the training and things that are instilled in you as an agent."

When Wilson purportedly went to the scene, he was also unquestionably aware of the extraordinary significance of Ray's Mustang. In fact, he told District Attorney Howard that "everyone in the United States was looking for [the] white Mustang." According to Wilson, the Mustang was "an infamous car."

Official documents also reflect that senior FBI officials in Washington, D.C. and the Atlanta field office, where Wilson worked, issued instructions that no agent touch the car. Thus, all FBI agents should have been more likely to exercise extreme care and adhere to standard law enforcement procedures with regard to Ray's car. In light of these circumstances, it seems incredible that a novice agent, like Wilson, would have had been foolhardy enough to tamper with Ray's car and steal evidence.

Moreover, even if there had been an "argument" between law enforcement officers about opening the Mustang's door -- a point unsubstantiated and contradicted by independent

evidence -- it seems unbelievable that Wilson would have found it "silly" and totally implausible that it would have caused him to disregard his training and explicit instructions from senior officials. In fact, given Wilson's claim that he became an FBI agent because of his concern for civil rights, it seems inconceivable that he would have chosen -- for any reason -- to touch the Mustang, confiscate evidence, and potentially compromise the search for and conviction of Dr. King's murderer.

2. Wilson's Purported Motive for Public Disclosure after 30 Years of Silence

Wilson told Howard that the "sole predication for my coming forward is to be * * * of assistance to the * * * King family in their effort to get at the truth." He explained that he would not have released the documents had he "not seen Mrs. King make an appeal * * * this pass [sic] summer * * * to have a trial for Ray in order that the King family * * * could have answers to questions that they have sought regarding the death of Reverend King."

Wilson's explanation for disclosure of the documents after three decades of silence is suspect. If Wilson intended to assist the King family, he never would have concealed the existence of the document with the FBI office telephone number during his initial public disclosure. Likewise, if Wilson were genuinely interested in a full investigation aimed to "get at the truth," he never would have withheld the original documents until execution of a search warrant was imminent, provided false information, or refused to furnish information about the alleged burglary of his office.

Furthermore, if Wilson actually sought discovery of the truth, he would have disclosed the existence of the documents long before 1998. Since his resignation from the FBI, there have been several public investigations that focused on specific claims directly relevant to the documents. For example, not long after Wilson resigned from the FBI, Congress conducted a highly publicized investigation of both the Kennedy and King assassinations. It specifically considered allegations regarding Raoul and whether the FBI, its Atlanta field office, or others were involved in a conspiracy. It also evaluated James Earl Ray's claims that he was framed by Raoul and a government conspiracy. In so doing, it heard the testimony and examined the conduct of former FBI agents whom Wilson knew and worked with in Atlanta. If Wilson found papers in Ray's car with the telephone number of the FBI Atlanta field office and the name Raul, it is suspicious that he did not come forward with his evidence during the congressional investigation. Indeed, the HSCA hearings provided Wilson, when he was no longer an FBI agent, the perfect opportunity, wholly independent of the FBI or Department of Justice, to reveal his information to a receptive audience.

Wilson's silence over the years is even more inexplicable in light of his alleged commitment to civil rights, purported concern for justice, misgivings about the FBI, and training as a law enforcement officer. During his meetings with District Attorney Howard and our attorneys, Wilson spent considerable time expressing his disillusionment with and distrust of the FBI. Thus, if Wilson, as a former law enforcement officer, actually had evidence that both potentially implicated the FBI and suggested the innocence of the person in prison for the murder of Dr. King, it is unbelievable that he would have hid it for 30 years.

In any event, Wilson has offered no explanation for his failure to come forward after he saw the 1993 HBO mock trial and, as he has claimed in one of his accounts, fully recognized the significance of the documents. Instead, he remained silent for another four years. Consequently, his explanations for keeping the documents secret are unconvincing.

F. Scientific Testing And Analysis Of The Documents

1. Description of the Documents

In September 1998, our investigative team obtained two documents from Wilson. See Attachment 1. The first document is a partially torn page from a 1963 Dallas, Texas telephone book, which lists persons with the last name of Hunt. Two pencil entries are handwritten in the upper margin of the partial page: "J" with a surrounding circle, followed by "LA 84775" and "Raul 214-." Immediately following "Raul 214-," the page is torn.

In 1963, as today, "214" was the area code for Dallas, Texas, and "LA 84775" was a telephone number listed in both the Dallas business and residential directories. It was listed as Jack Ruby's office and as the Vegas Club, a Dallas night club owned by Ruby. The number was permanently disconnected shortly after Ruby murdered Lee Harvey Oswald, President Kennedy's accused assassin.⁽⁵⁹⁾

The second document consists of eight lines of handwriting. The first six lines are two columns of handwritten words and numbers. On the last two lines is written "before 4-15 [unintelligible];" "after Raul X 213."

The handwritten column of numbers may be a list of monetary amounts because all of the handwritten figures end with ".00." None of the words -- except the name "Raul" -- appear to have any connection to Dr. King's assassination or James Earl Ray. The notation "before 4-15" could, however, refer to April 15 since Dr. King was killed on April 4. Additionally, another notation "X 213" could refer to a telephone area code, a telephone extension, or a room number. Ray was known to have spent time in Los Angeles, which in 1968 had a 213 area code. We were unable, however, to find any facts to support such speculation about "before 4-15" or "X 213."

Because the figures and words on the second document otherwise seem to have no meaning, the investigative team retained an expert in the private sector to determine whether the document evidences a code. Bruce Schneier of Counterpane Systems concluded that "[a]lthough it is * * * possible that the numbers do form a code, [it] is extremely unlikely." Accordingly, we found no plausible leads to investigate based on the information written on the second document.

2. Results of Scientific Testing and Analysis

The investigative team met with experts from the United States Secret Service (USSS) laboratory and arranged for appropriate scientific testing and analysis of the documents. The central issues sought to be addressed -- whether the documents came from Ray's car in 1968 and who authored them -- could not be definitively answered. The laboratory also could not determine the precise age of the handwritten notations on the documents. Circumstances related to one of the documents, however, raise suspicions about its authenticity.

a. Origin and age of the documents

The laboratory compared the torn page from the telephone directory with a comparable Dallas telephone directory from the Dallas Public Library and found the aging of the sample consistent with an actual directory. In addition, it found the words printed on the sample identical to what appears on page 386 of a 1963 Dallas directory. As to the

appearance of both documents, the USSS found that "[t]he yellowing and brittleness * * * is consistent with expected natural aging."

Because all the handwritten entries on the two documents were in pencil, rather than pen, the laboratory could not pinpoint the precise age of the writing. It nonetheless initially drew some conclusions about the age of the notations by studying the paper and analyzing the pressure used to make the handwritten entries. It noted that the pressure from the handwriting was sufficient to have produced cracking on the back side of old, brittle paper if "recently" made. Because no "microscopic fiber breakage was detected" on the documents, the laboratory concluded "there is no evidence to suggest that these entries were produced recently on old paper." It further explained that because "[t]he false creation of these documents would have required a great deal of knowledge regarding ink, paper, and document aging," "it is unlikely that the [] documents were recently produced."

Subsequently, we obtained and furnished the USSS laboratory with an original 1963 Dallas telephone directory that had been stored in a public library. We asked them to test and compare the sample directory with the original Wilson document.⁽⁶⁰⁾

The laboratory found there was "[c]onsistency in brittleness and overall aging characteristics" between the Wilson document and the actual 1963 telephone directory. After writing on page 386 from the 1963 telephone directory "utilizing similar pressures and angles and various backing materials" and comparing the results with the Wilson document, "[n]o differences in brittleness or fiber breakage were noted." Thus, based on its earlier finding that the handwritten notation "Raul 214-" was placed on the Wilson document after it was torn from the telephone book, see Section V.F.2.d. below, and its writing experiments, the USSS concluded that "a 1963 Dallas telephone book could have been located, a page torn from it and a pencil entry added in recent times to create a document consistent with" the Wilson document.

Scientific testing could not resolve whether the Wilson documents are authentic, the precise age of their handwritten entries, or whether they actually came from Ray's car in 1968. However, because the USSS found no "microscopic fiber breakage" when it wrote on an actual page from a 1963 Dallas directory, the Wilson document could have been recently created by someone finding a 1963 Dallas telephone book, ripping the appropriate page from the book, and writing the pencil entries on the page.

b. Authorship of the documents

The investigative team furnished the USSS with handwriting samples for comparison with the known handwriting of several individuals, including James Earl Ray, his two brothers, Jerry and John, Donald Wilson, and a Raul from New York, whom Ray and others identified in 1994 as Raoul. See Section VI.C.2. below. As to the document consisting entirely of handwritten penciled notations, it concluded that "it is unlikely that any of the specimen writers authored the questioned material." It also found the handwriting on the torn page from the Dallas telephone directory was too "limited" to "determine[] with any degree of certainty, whether or not any of the submitted specimen writers is the author."

The USSS also examined the documents to determine whether the notations were naturally written or disguised. It found "no evidence of disguise" based on the "examinations [that were] possible." It further noted that "[a]lthough the questioned writing [on the document consisting entirely of handwritten entries] contains some evidence of slowness and uniform pressure, the absence of known handwriting exemplars precludes a determination as to whether the writing is a simulation." It also

concluded that "in all probability," the handwritten notations on the two documents were made by different persons because they were applied with different pencils and pressure and have dissimilar individual characters.

c. Absence of latent fingerprints

The USSS laboratory evaluated the documents under laser light for latent fingerprints and found none. We then considered whether to treat the documents with chemicals to search further for latent prints. Because this destructive procedure affects the ability to conduct future testing, we chose not to chemically process the documents for fingerprints. Since scientific testing had not resolved the age or origin of the documents, we wanted to preserve their integrity in the event further analysis becomes appropriate. Moreover, because of the condition of the documents, utilizing a destructive chemical process appears only marginally more likely to achieve useful results than the unsuccessful laser examination.

d. Scientific analysis of the torn page from the 1963 Dallas telephone directory

Scientific testing of the partial torn page from the telephone directory establishes that "Raul 214-" was written in the upper right margin after the page was torn from the telephone book. The USSS explained, "[m]icroscopic analysis indicates that [the] pencil entry not only is contained on the top surface of the document, but also within the torn edge." In other words, the penciled dash (-) from the "Raul 214-" extends onto the torn edge of the page.⁽⁶¹⁾ The USSS also found that the pressure and sharpness of all the characters indicate that the entire entry was made "at the same moment with the same pencil."⁽⁶²⁾ Accordingly, it explained, "[a]s a result of all the examinations and experiments it can only be concluded that the entry ["Raul 214-"] was placed after the tear."

G. Suspicious Circumstances Relating To The Torn Page From The 1963 Dallas Telephone Directory

There are several suspicious circumstances relating to the partially torn page from the 1963 Dallas telephone directory. First, the content of a handwritten entry and its placement on the torn page suggest that the document was designed to create the false impression that James Earl Ray once possessed Raul's full telephone number. The notation "Raul 214-" appears to be a reference to Raul's area code since 214 was the area code for Dallas, appears on a page from the Dallas telephone directory, and immediately follows the only other handwritten entry, which is a Dallas telephone number. Because the page is torn precisely at the point of the dash (-) of "Raul 214-," the document seemingly implies that Raul's entire telephone number once followed and was written on the page when it was whole and not yet torn from the directory.⁽⁶³⁾

The scientific evidence described above nonetheless demonstrates otherwise. Scientific testing established that "Raul 214-" was written on the scrap of paper after it was torn from the telephone directory. Thus, contrary to the impression the document creates, the pre-torn, whole page from the telephone directory never contained the remainder of Raul's telephone number.

The notation of Raul's area code without his entire telephone number is suspicious. An area code without the remaining telephone number is of little use since it could not have provided Ray or anyone else with enough information to telephone Raul. It also seems strange to note only the Dallas area code, particularly when the Dallas telephone number

written immediately before it has no area code. Thus, scientific testing suggests that "Raul 214-" was placed on the document to create the false impression that James Earl Ray once possessed Raul's entire telephone number.

The torn page from the telephone directory also creates the impression that the assassinations of Dr. King and President Kennedy are connected. The document, which was allegedly found in Ray's car, notes the telephone number for Jack Ruby, Oswald's murderer; lists the telephone number for the Hunt family, whom some conspiracy theorists have speculated was involved in the assassination of President Kennedy; and mentions Raul. Additionally, because "Raul 214-" is written in the margin immediately next to Ruby's telephone number and Wilson claims to have retrieved the paper from Ray's car, the document implies that a Raul is somehow connected to both assassinations.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Contrary to the impression created by the document, we found no credible evidence that there is any connection between the two assassinations. Consistent with other official investigations, we found nothing reliable to connect James Earl Ray with anyone associated with President Kennedy's assassination, including Jack Ruby, Lee Harvey Oswald, or the Hunt family. In addition, we found no credible evidence to link the King assassination to the Hunt family, Jack Ruby, or any alleged conspirator in the Kennedy assassination. Other than the document itself and the uncorroborated, unreliable claims originating with witness Glenda Grabow (see Section VI.C.1. below), there is nothing to suggest that a Raul is linked to the Kennedy assassination.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Accordingly, it is far-fetched that a document connecting the two assassinations and suggesting that a Raul was somehow involved in both crimes would have fortuitously fallen out of Ray's abandoned car.

The possibility that the torn page came from Ray's car in 1968 is even more doubtful since the telephone number for Jack Ruby, written in the margin of the document -- "LA 84755" -- was permanently disconnected more than four years earlier, shortly after Ruby murdered Oswald in 1963. From 1960 until April 23, 1967, when Ray escaped, he was incarcerated in the Missouri State Prison in Jefferson County, Missouri. Because Ray was jailed until four months after Ruby died in a different prison in January 1967, Ray would not have had contact with anyone allegedly connected with the Kennedy assassination for the three years preceding and following the crime. Indeed, there seems to be no reasonable explanation for Ray's possessing in April 1968 -- a year after his escape from jail -- a torn page from a 1963 Dallas telephone book that provides a disconnected telephone number for Jack Ruby.

Even if such evidence had been in Ray's car, it seems implausible that it fortuitously fell out, as Wilson claims. Nothing else found in the Mustang when it was searched mentions a Raul or suggests a connection between the assassinations of Dr. King and President Kennedy. Indeed, as discussed in Section VI below, no evidence has been found in the three decades following Dr. King's assassination that even suggests that a Raul or Raoul exists. Thus, even if Wilson was at the scene and opened the Mustang's door, it seems implausible that such documents would have been in the car.

Ultimately, the contents of the documents alone do not conclusively establish that they are fabricated. At a minimum, however, they strongly suggest that Wilson did not obtain the documents from Ray's car.

H. Consideration Of Wilson's Belated Revelation Of An Additional Document

As discussed previously, Wilson revealed for the first time in September 1998 that he allegedly took an additional document from Ray's Mustang. According to Wilson, the

document was a piece of paper with the telephone number of the FBI Atlanta field office and otherwise unremarkable in its appearance. Additionally, he claimed that he could not remember whether the writing was in pen or pencil or its color. He provided no further details about the document.

Assuming the document exists, Wilson gave inconsistent information about its current location, claiming both that he had it in 1998 and that it had been stolen ten years earlier from his office. Equally significant, Wilson has failed to produce the document or a copy of it and refused to provide information that he claims might lead to its recovery.

We nonetheless reviewed the historical record to consider the inferences suggested by Wilson's belated claim that the document fell from Ray's car. We found no evidence that James Earl Ray was in any way involved with or connected to the FBI or had any contact with its officials or agents prior to the assassination. The 1976-1977 DOJ Task Force specifically investigated whether the FBI was involved or participated in a conspiracy related to the crime. It concluded there was no evidence suggesting either. In 1979, the HSCA reached a similar conclusion after a thorough investigation. We found nothing to disturb the conclusions of these two investigations or to suggest that the additional document is legitimate.

Wilson's belated claim, in and of itself, suggests no new investigative leads. Without the document, information concerning its whereabouts, any independent evidence suggesting a tie between James Earl Ray and the FBI, or evidence to substantiate any portion of Wilson's contradictory allegations, no further investigation is warranted.

I. James Earl Ray's Comments About The Wilson Documents

If Wilson took the documents from James Earl Ray's car and they relate to Ray's activities at the time of the assassination, Ray should have remembered them. Significantly, he did not.

On March 26, 1998, a reporter with the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* interviewed Ray about the documents by telephone. Ray stated that he did not recall the documents or know of any connection between Jack Ruby and the assassination of Dr. King. He also expressed a desire to verify Raoul's existence and commented that the documents "definitely help." He declined, however, to confirm that the documents came from his car.

Ray's comments are significant not only because he would most likely have been aware of what he left behind in his car, but also because he clearly had a strong motive to claim the documents. When interviewed, Ray was 70, dying of terminal liver disease, and knew that the discussion might be one of his final opportunities to vindicate his name or obtain the trial he had been seeking. In addition, Ray had maintained for 30 years that Raoul caused him to become an unwitting participant in the assassination. Since the documents would have been the first and only substantive evidence tending to verify Raoul's existence and his connection to Ray and the alleged conspiracy, Ray would have claimed them if they actually came from his car. Even if they did not come from his car, Ray nonetheless had a strong motive to maintain they were authentic. But, he did not do so. Thus, Ray's response refutes Wilson's allegation.

J. Wilson's Conduct During Our Investigation

1. Wilson's Refusal to Provide the Documents

When Wilson was interviewed by District Attorney Paul Howard in March 1998, he not

only claimed that he wanted the Department of Justice to investigate but also sought Howard's assistance in getting the documents to Attorney General Reno. He also explained his distrust of the FBI and predicted it would seek to destroy him when it learned about the documents. He repeatedly told Howard that he hoped that the Attorney General "will do the right thing and initiate some sort of action to get to the bottom of this thing so we can once and for all get this matter behind us." Immediately after the meeting, Wilson, accompanied by Dr. Pepper, attended a press conference.

Ten days later, on the 30th anniversary of Dr. King's death, Wilson appeared in Memphis as a speaker at a conference of the Coalition on Political Assassinations, a Washington-based group interested in conspiracy theories. In his speech to the group, he withdrew his offer to provide the documents to the Department of Justice.

During the next several months, Wilson granted interviews to several reporters. He even took one reporter to a bank and was photographed with two of the documents he said he took from Ray's car.

In September 1998, Wilson met with our attorneys. He took them to a bank, but refused to show the original documents or to commit to their future release after he learned a United States Marshal was posted at the location. In fact, Wilson only turned over the documents after he learned that execution of a search warrant for his bank safe deposit box was imminent. Wilson made several substantially inconsistent statements about the documents and their recovery. See Sections V.B. and C. above.

2. Wilson's Refusal to Provide Information and Accept Immunity

Wilson's lack of cooperation continued after our investigative team obtained the documents. Wilson has not been forthcoming with certain information. Most significantly, he repeatedly refused to answer questions about the alleged theft of documents from his office, even though he claimed to have information that might lead to their recovery.

In April 1999, citing information contained in the affidavit in support of the search warrant for the documents, Wilson expressed a concern that he might be prosecuted for having concealed and withheld the documents in violation of federal law. He requested that we draft an immunity agreement for his consideration. In a letter dated April 22, 1999, we provided Wilson a draft agreement that offered him immunity for any federal law violation committed "in connection with the documents" so long as he fully cooperated with our investigation and provided all information and evidence relating to the documents. See Attachment 7. Without explanation, Wilson not only rejected the offer, but expressed his intent to terminate all "further dialogue with the Department of Justice." See Attachment 8. He also declined our offer to take a polygraph examination even though the *Chicago Tribune* reported that he had offered to take one.

3. Conclusions Regarding Wilson's Failure to Cooperate Fully

Wilson's interactions with the King family and Dr. Pepper, the District Attorney, the media, and our investigative team have been inconsistent with his professed desire for a full investigation to disclose the truth about the documents. In fact, Wilson has been evasive, dilatory, and duplicitous.

Wilson initially sought out the King family and the District Attorney purportedly to ensure that the Department of Justice fully investigated the documents. He nonetheless refused to release the original documents until a search warrant was obtained and its

execution was imminent. Thereafter, he refused to provide information related to the documents allegedly stolen from him and eventually terminated all contact with our investigation after receiving the immunity agreement he had requested. Wilson also made incomplete, varied, and inconsistent statements to our investigative team. Moreover, those statements contradicted the previous accounts he gave to the King family and Dr. Pepper, the District Attorney, and the media.

Wilson's lack of cooperation and contradictory statements about the documents raise serious suspicions about his motives and credibility. His withholding of the original documents, refusal to answer questions about the allegedly stolen documents, and precipitous rejection of our offer of immunity, all suggest an ulterior motive -- a concern about disclosing the truth. His irreconcilable contradictory statements establish that he was necessarily untruthful on one occasion or another, and likely altogether untruthful.

Wilson's duplicitous conduct is further evidence that he is not telling the truth about how he obtained the documents.

K. Conclusions Regarding Wilson's Allegations

The evidence establishes that Wilson did not find the documents in Ray's car as he claims. No single factor or piece of evidence leads to this conclusion. Rather, Wilson's inconsistent statements, his conduct, and substantial, independent evidence refuting his claims, all demonstrate that his implausible accounts are not worthy of belief.

In March 1998, Wilson publicly disclosed that for 30 years he had been concealing documents he said he took in 1968 from Ray's abandoned car. At the time, he claimed that he retrieved four documents from Ray's car. Wilson also explained that he did not look at the documents until he got home that night and only recognized their significance in 1993, after he watched a televised mock trial about the assassination.

Six months after his public disclosure, Wilson radically changed his account. For the first time, he claimed that he had actually found an additional document with the telephone number of the FBI Atlanta field office in Ray's car. That document, according to Wilson, along with the two others that he still had, were in his bank safe deposit box. The following day, Wilson changed his story and said that the newly-reported additional document had been stolen in the 1980s, along with the two business cards, by someone who eventually worked in the White House. He also reported that he immediately recognized the significance of the documents when he first looked at them at the scene. Because the inconsistencies in Wilson's accounts are irreconcilable, Wilson has necessarily been untruthful in his initial statements to the King family and Dr. Pepper, the District Attorney, and the media, or subsequent accounts to the investigative team and the media, or both.

We also found independent, reliable evidence to contradict fundamental aspects of Wilson's otherwise unsubstantiated version of events. For instance, Wilson claimed that he found the passenger-side door of Ray's Mustang unlocked and ajar and opened it because a discussion between uniform officers about whether to open the car was "silly." Original police records and investigative interviews establish, however, that two plainclothes detectives found the Mustang locked, as reported by civilians, and unlocked the driver-side door with a coat hanger approximately two hours before any FBI agents even arrived on the scene. Photographic evidence, original police records, eyewitness accounts, and expert analysis all demonstrate that when FBI agents were on the scene, neither door of the Mustang was ajar and the passenger-side door was locked. Thus, assuming Wilson was at the scene -- something we could not substantiate -- he could not have seen what he reported or gained entry to Ray's car as he described.

Wilson's conduct also belies his professed desire to have the Department of Justice fully investigate the truth about the documents. Within days of his public call for a full inquiry, he withdrew his public offer to provide the documents and resisted our efforts to obtain them. Even though he showed the original documents to the media, we did not see or obtain them until he learned that execution of a search warrant was imminent.

Wilson's refusal to share information he claims might lead to recovery of the purportedly stolen documents is also suspicious. So, too, is his rejection of immunity and precipitous termination of all contact with the investigation. Both suggest that Wilson is hiding information and is concerned about what the truth may reveal.

Also important to our conclusion is the fact that specific aspects of Wilson's account are implausible. We find Wilson's explanation for allegedly tampering with Ray's car totally unconvincing in light of his training, the significance of the crime scene, explicit instructions he received, his status as a new agent, and his joining the FBI purportedly because of his concern for civil rights. We also find Wilson's alleged motive for coming forward after 30 years implausible in light of his failure to provide complete, truthful, and consistent information to the King family, the media, and our investigative team since his initial disclosure. In addition, we find it completely implausible that a torn page from a 1963 Dallas telephone directory that links the assassinations of Dr. King and President Kennedy, contains references to Raul, and has the disconnected telephone number of Jack Ruby would have been in Ray's car in 1968 and fallen out just when Wilson allegedly opened the door.

Further, we find it compelling that James Earl Ray failed to identify the documents. He should have recalled them had they been in his car, and he had a strong motive to claim them, regardless of their authenticity.

Finally, scientific analysis could not conclusively determine who authored the documents or the precise age of the handwritten notations on them. The content of the writing and its position on the torn page from the Dallas telephone directory nonetheless suggest that the document was designed to create the false impression that the assassinations of President Kennedy and Dr. King are connected and that James Earl Ray once had Raul's complete telephone number.

We have no explanation for Wilson's initial public disclosure or subsequent contradictory accounts about the documents. Regardless of his motive, it is nonetheless clear that Wilson has been untruthful, withheld information, and provided inconsistent accounts that are implausible, unsubstantiated, and inconsistent with known facts.

Based on all available information, we do not credit Wilson's allegation that he found documents in James Earl Ray's car. Accordingly, Wilson's documents are not evidence related to Dr. King's assassination.

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