

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/23/68

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██████████ Louisiana, telephone number ██████████ advised that he was born September 18, 1936, in New Orleans, Louisiana. On January ██████████ at New Orleans, he married ██████████ and has one son and three daughters. For the past thirteen (13) years, ██████████ has been employed as a ██████████ at the West Trucking Company, New Orleans.

██████████ stated that sometime just before the MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., assassination, exact date unrecalled, he telephonically spoke to his brother, ██████████ in Memphis, Tennessee. ██████████ made this telephone call from his mother's residence. The purpose of this call was to borrow \$200 from his brother. ██████████ did not make this call from his own residence, as he did not want his spouse to know about the loan. His brother, ██████████, wired him \$200 in care of his mother's residence in New Orleans.

While on the telephone with his brother ██████████ invited him to visit him in Memphis, or to meet him at Hot Springs, Arkansas. ██████████ advised that his brother, ██████████ follows the race horses and likes to go to a race track at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and bet horses. ██████████ discussed his winnings and loses on the telephone with ██████████. ██████████ does not recall the exact amounts of money he discussed.

██████████ viewed photographs of JAMES EARL RAY and ██████████ and advised that he did not know either of these individuals and he did not believe that he had ever seen either of these individuals.

On 4/23/68 at New Orleans, Louisiana File # NO 157-10673

by SA ██████████ 23 Date dictated 4/23/68

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RE: James Earl Ray

Investigation by both Memphis and New Orleans has failed to associate any of the [redacted] with the Mafia - La Cosa Nostra, or to Carlos Marcellos.

According to Mr. Flannery's memorandum, [redacted] states that [redacted] and [redacted] Aka. [redacted] and [redacted] two professional killers, are also involved in this matter. [redacted] claims that [redacted] allegedly met James Earl Ray at a Lion Service Station in Memphis the day of or the night before the shooting and [redacted] has been saying he works for [redacted] and is responsible for "getting" James Earl Ray. According to one of [redacted] New Orleans informants, James Earl Ray was seen at or stayed at the Pontotoc Hotel in Memphis approximately three days before the shooting.

[redacted] also refers to an individual by the name [redacted] who was interviewed by both Flannery and [redacted] and allegedly made a statement to the effect that according to one [redacted] met [redacted] at a Lion Service Station on the night before or the day of the shooting.

In connection with the information contained in the foregoing paragraph, [redacted] Aka. [redacted] was interviewed on November 19, 1968. His comments are set forth as follows:

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[redacted], Memphis, Tennessee, unlisted Telephone [redacted] was interviewed at his place of employment, [redacted], Inc., [redacted] Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, Telephone [redacted], and was apprised of the identities of interviewing Special Agents of the FBI. [redacted] furnished the following information:

[redacted] advised that he is familiar with an individual by the name [redacted], whom he met through [redacted] Aka. [redacted] shortly after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. [redacted] stated he was introduced in August, 1968, to an individual known as Nick Flannery, who stated he was from the Justice Department, Washington, D. C. [redacted] advised that originally [redacted] had asked [redacted] to ascertain information from Negroes in the Memphis community concerning the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., but then asked [redacted] to obtain any information concerning the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., with the possibility that the "Mafia" was connected with King's death. [redacted] advised that he made no attempt to ascertain any information concerning the Mafia and the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.

He stated that when he met Flannery, he repeated to Flannery exactly what [redacted] had previously told him, namely that [redacted] met with James Earl Ray at a Lion Service Station on the day before the death of Martin Luther King. He stated that this information came from [redacted] and was in no way information he developed on his own. He stated that [redacted] is known to him as a cosmetics salesman in the Memphis area and is known to drink frequently in Caesar's Lounge, which according to [redacted] is owned by [redacted]. [redacted] states [redacted] is a former schoolmate of his and a legitimate businessman in the Memphis community. [redacted] states [redacted] is a nephew of [redacted], whom [redacted] described as a local Memphis businessman. He identified [redacted] Aka. [redacted] as a worker on a tug boat on the Mississippi River. He stated neither [redacted] nor [redacted] is known to him as a professional killer. [redacted] states both [redacted] and [redacted] are employed in the Memphis area and his only association with them has been

On 11/19/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # Memphis 44-1987

by SA [redacted] RF:BN Date dictated 11/20/68

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through the Club Caesar, which is owned by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] advised that [REDACTED] inquired about [REDACTED] who is known to [REDACTED] as a possible segregationist in the Memphis area. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] is of the opinion that if a car was used to go to Millington, as described by the news media, then [REDACTED] is the logical person, although no reason was given by [REDACTED] for this. [REDACTED] said [REDACTED] was of the opinion that if another white Mustang was used to assist the killer of King in escaping the Memphis area, as referred to by the news media concerning the CB radio broadcast, then he considered [REDACTED] to be the logical person to have a private airplane waiting at Millington.

[REDACTED] further stated that [REDACTED] is of the opinion that officers who were suspended for alleged police brutality within the past year are involved in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King. According to [REDACTED] does not give any basis for this.

[REDACTED] told [REDACTED] that he has contact with the Mafia in New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia, although he named only one individual, one [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] as his contact with the Mafia in New Orleans.

[REDACTED] stated he has had numerous casual meetings with [REDACTED] and during this period [REDACTED] has volunteered certain information of his personal life to [REDACTED] including facts regarding the tragic death of [REDACTED] wife. While volunteering information to [REDACTED] regarding his wife's illness, [REDACTED] mentioned that his wife had become addicted to the use of narcotics during her illness and in this regard had cooperated with Federal Drug Administration Supervisor [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had asked [REDACTED] to ascertain information regarding narcotics from [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] described [REDACTED] as being unreliable and as attributing false information to [REDACTED] which information was actually rumored by [REDACTED]. According to [REDACTED] by originating these rumors in different areas in Memphis, is able to get a "play back" from various sources, which he uses as a means of lending credence to his stories.

[REDACTED] advised he could furnish no information concerning any conspiracy in the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. He said he knows of no individuals involved with James Earl Ray in the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.

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With regard to the allegation that Ray resided at the Pontotoc Hotel in Memphis approximately three days prior to the killing of Martin Luther King, Jr., a complete review of the records of the Pontotoc Hotel, 69 West Pontotoc Street, Memphis, on 11/18/68 for the period March 23 through April 8, 1968, failed to reveal any information concerning Ray under his true name or known aliases. [REDACTED] Pontotoc Hotel, [REDACTED] has 27 sleeping rooms at the Pontotoc Hotel, and that approximately 21 or 22 of these rooms are occupied by more or less permanent residents. He claims he himself resides at the hotel and he is positive that Ray never resided at this hotel during the past eleven years.

According to Mr. Flannery's memorandum, [REDACTED] claims that a [REDACTED] Memphis, was advised by a ranking officer in the Memphis Police Department (Captain or above) not to go near Dr. King because something was going to happen to him.

Reverend [REDACTED] Memphis, was interviewed by Agents of the FBI on 11/18/68. Reverend [REDACTED] claims that he has known [REDACTED], a contract reporter for "Time" magazine, since approximately April, 1968, and has had frequent contact with him since that date. He claims that, in fact, [REDACTED] at the present time maintains a room at [REDACTED] residence.

With regard to the information [REDACTED] attributes to [REDACTED], Reverend [REDACTED] stated that those are not the exact words he has used in discussions with [REDACTED], and the statement attributed to him by [REDACTED] has been taken completely out of context and is inaccurate.

[REDACTED] refused to state whether he had any discussion with any Memphis police officer concerning Martin Luther King, Jr.; however, he admitted that he has had many conversations with ranking police officers of the Memphis Police Department in the past six years. [REDACTED] admitted

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that he currently does hold a grudge against the Memphis Police Department due to the fact that he is not satisfied with the manner in which certain officers of the Police Department have handled complaints he has made to the Department in the past.

Reverend [redacted] describes [redacted] as being an alcoholic who is currently experiencing marital difficulties. By "alcoholic", Reverend [redacted] stated he means that he has observed [redacted] commence drinking alcoholic beverages, namely wine and hard liquor, as early as 8 o'clock in the morning and to continue to consume these alcoholic beverages throughout the day and into the night.

According to the memorandum of Mr. Flannery, [redacted] claims that shortly after the killing a bartender overheard some Memphis policemen say there had been a "slip up" and that the assassination was originally scheduled to take place after the march for which Dr. King had returned to Memphis.

Since [redacted] was either unwilling or unable to identify the bartender, the Memphis Office of the FBI has been unable to conduct any investigation to determine the veracity of this allegation; however, a review of the records of the Memphis Police Department and the Memphis FBI Office has failed to reveal any information to indicate that such an incident was ever reported to these respective law enforcement agencies.

According to Mr. Flannery's memorandum, [redacted] refers to a civilian having been observed lying in the back of a police car immediately after the shooting and near Mulberry and Huling. He got out of the police car, into another car, and was driven away.

In this regard, the records of the Memphis Police Department reveal the following:

At 6:55 p.m. on 4/4/68, [redacted], a white male, and [redacted], a white male, were both arrested at Second Street and Vance, by officers assigned to Police Tactical Unit #14, inasmuch as they refused to give the

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officers any reason for being in the area of the Lorraine Motel at the time of the shooting of Reverend King. According to the arresting officers, these two individuals were placed in a marked patrol car, questioned, and then transferred to an unmarked police car for transportation to Central Police Headquarters. According to Inspector [REDACTED], Memphis Police Department, the handling of these prisoners was standard operating procedure and most persons arrested by tactical units during disturbances during this period were transported to Headquarters in unmarked cars; one arrestee to a car.

According to Mr. Flannery's memorandum, [REDACTED] claims that an unidentified Negro policeman was removed from his assignment at the Fire Station at about 5 p.m. on the day of the assassination. [REDACTED] identifies this policeman as [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] also states that two Negro firemen were moved from the station a day or two before the shooting. One of them had reportedly told friends that two or three days before Dr. King was shot a telescope or binoculars had been set up on a tripod in the Fire Station and focused on the Lorraine Motel balcony. According to this memorandum, [REDACTED] in August advised Flannery that one fireman left the Department or was suspended, shortly after the shooting, and that he had been unable to locate either of them.

In this regard, Inspector [REDACTED] Intelligence Unit, Memphis Police Department, advised on 11/18/68, that on 4/3/68 he assigned Detective [REDACTED] and Patrolman [REDACTED] Negro officers, both of whom are assigned to the Inspection Division of the Memphis Police Department, to a security detail at the Memphis Fire Station, Engine House #2, located at Butler and Main Streets. This location is approximately one block from the Lorraine Motel. The purpose of this assignment was to observe the activities of the "Invaders," local Black Power group at Memphis. A number of the "Invaders" were rooming at the Lorraine Motel at this time. These two officers were equipped with binoculars and were stationed in a room at the rear of the fire station, with a view that included

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the room later occupied by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

In connection with this assignment, and prior to the time Officers [redacted] and [redacted] physically proceeded to this assigned location, it was determined by the Intelligence Unit of the Memphis Police Department that a Negro fireman stationed at the Fire Station and named [redacted] had taken an active part in demonstrations by the striking sanitation workers in February and March, 1968, and had been closely associated with black militants connected with the strike. In order to insure security for Officers [redacted] and [redacted] and to insure that no information regarding the Memphis Police Department Intelligence Unit's efforts to keep abreast of the activities of the "Invaders" was leaked to the black militants in Memphis, the Chief of the Memphis Fire Department was requested to temporarily transfer Fireman [redacted] to another fire station. This was done on 4/3/68.

In addition, on 4/4/68, Negro Fireman [redacted] was routinely assigned from Fire Station #2 to Fire Station #31, due to a manpower shortage at Fire Station #31.

On 11/18/68, [redacted] advised that by letter dated 5/18/68, Fireman [redacted] resigned from the Memphis Fire Department after thirteen years of service giving as his reason for leaving "Personal Reasons." [redacted] advised it is his understanding that [redacted] has become an active worker with the NAACP at Memphis subsequent to his resignation from the Memphis Fire Department.

At approximately 4:15 p.m. on 4/4/68, Lt. [redacted] of the Intelligence Unit of the Memphis Police Department, on instructions from Inspector [redacted] proceeded to Fire Engine House #2 and removed Detective [redacted] from this station, leaving Officer [redacted] at this post. The reason for the removal of Officer [redacted] was due to the receipt of a telephone call on the morning of 4/4/68 by [redacted] for Senator McClellan's Senate Investigating Committee, Washington, D. C., to the effect that information had been

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received by the Committee that a Negro detective on the Memphis Police Department was to be killed.

Due to Detective [REDACTED] activities in attending meetings of the striking sanitation workers in February and March 1968, [REDACTED] had been threatened on several occasions. Inspector [REDACTED] therefore believed the telephone call received by the McClellan Committee was another threat directed against [REDACTED]. He therefore ordered [REDACTED] removed from his lookout post at Engine House #2 for [REDACTED] own protection. A police guard of two officers was assigned to [REDACTED] and his family as a result of this threat.

A review of the tapes of the Memphis Police Department radio transmissions for April 4, 1968, failed to reflect any transmissions from Police Dispatcher ordering [REDACTED] to move from his observation post and, in fact, it has been ascertained that no radio equipment was maintained by the Police officers at this observation post with which to receive radio transmissions.

According to this memorandum, [REDACTED] mentions something to the effect that [REDACTED] of the Memphis Police Department telephonically contacted the Lorraine Motel regarding stationing detectives at the motel.

In this regard, [REDACTED] was advised that he does not recall talking to any maid at the Lorraine Motel on 4/4/68; however, he stated he had been in telephonic contact on a number of occasions with [REDACTED] regarding the identity of certain individuals registered at the Motel.

It has been determined from the Memphis Police Department that on the morning of 4/3/68, Memphis [REDACTED] ordered [REDACTED] of the Department to send a detail of men to the Memphis Metropolitan Airport to offer security to the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and his party. Police records reflect that Inspector [REDACTED] offered the services of the police detail to [REDACTED]

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[redacted] who was acting as chauffeur for Dr. Martin Luther King. Mrs. Mathews advised Lt. [redacted] Memphis Police Department, who is an officer in this detail, that they had not asked for police to be assigned to protect Dr. King, and did not desire a police escort. In addition, members of King's party refused to tell the police detail where they planned to stay or their itinerary while in Memphis. Inspector [redacted] while offering the services of the Memphis Police Department to Dr. King for security, escort, and protection purposes, was advised by the Reverend [redacted] an associate of King, that no assistance was desired and that they had not fully made up their minds where they were going with Reverend KING after they left the Memphis Metropolitan Airport.

At approximately 1:30 a.m., on 4/5/68, [redacted] a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) Strategy Committee, advised [redacted] of the Memphis Police Department that this SCLC Strategy Committee had considered asking for police protection for the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.; however, the Committee had decided against this.

According to Mr. Flannery's memorandum, [redacted] stated that a little Negro boy allegedly heard a shot and saw a man jump up from the bushes behind the rooming house (below the window area from which the shot is thought to have been fired) and run off. According to [redacted] the little boy has been identified and interviewed by Bureau Agents and the Memphis Police Department.

In this regard, a review of the records of the Memphis Police Department and the Memphis FBI Office has failed to reveal any information to indicate that any officers of these respective law enforcement agencies interviewed a young Negro boy who is allegedly the contributor of the above information by [redacted]. In this regard, on 11/15/68, Source One and Source Two both advised that [redacted] a 'Time' magazine

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reporter, had gone throughout the Memphis area immediately following the King slaying, and was overheard asking leading questions of Negroes, namely, "You think it's possible that a police officer could have killed Martin Luther King, Jr.?" According to these sources, as a result of this, practically the entire Memphis Negro community has given vent to the rumor that a police officer had killed King. The sources claim this rumor has embittered a very large segment of the Negro community and has caused widespread distrust by Negroes against all law enforcement officers and has caused a serious community cleavage between the Police and the Negro community.

In view of the fact that numerous allegations have been made, either by [redacted] or his alleged sources, stating involvement of Memphis police officers in the assassination of Dr. King, Frank Holloman, Director of Fire & Police, was contacted. Holloman advised that shortly after the assassination of Dr. King he received information that a representative of "Time" magazine was circulating in the Negro community and asking questions of the Negro residents. His sources informed him that the general tenor of the questions being asked was to the effect that it was conceivable that the Memphis Police Department was involved in the assassination of Dr. King. Director Holloman advised that later he learned the reported "Time" representative was an individual by the name of [redacted]. He subsequently had an appointment with [redacted].

Director Holloman said at this time he informed [redacted] that he had received certain information indicating that [redacted] had, by his questions, created the inference in the Negro community that it was possible the Memphis Police Department was involved in the assassination of Dr. King. Director Holloman advised that he told [redacted] that [redacted] wrote a story based on rumors and misstatements of facts such as he was collecting regarding the involvement of the Memphis Police Department, Director Holloman would institute a civil suit against him and do everything in his power to insure that [redacted] wrote only the truth and did not print such falsifications regarding the Memphis Police Department.

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Director Holloman stated that after his discussion with [REDACTED] has not again called at his office for any information, nor has any story appeared.

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BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT (BOP),
Also known as Black Organizing Power,
Afro-American Brotherhood,
Black Student Association,
Invaders,
LeMoyne Intercollegiate Chapter of the
National Association for the Advancement
of Colored People (NAACP),
City Organizers

On April 18, 1968, a third source advised that a black power group in Memphis which has been in existence for several months has until recently been known as Black Organizing Power. It is now known as Black Organizing Project (BOP), also known as Black Organizing Power, with five cells or parts, known as (1) Afro-American Brotherhood (AAB), primarily consisting of Owen College students; (2) Black Student Association (BSA), primarily consisting of Memphis State University (MSU) Negro students; (3) LeMoyne Intercollegiate Chapter of the NAACP, consisting of LeMoyne College students; (4) the Invaders, consisting mostly of high school dropouts; and (5) the City Organizers, comprised of young adults.

AAB has about 12 members; BSA has about 20 members; the Invaders has about 15 members; the LeMoyne group has about 20 members; and the City Organizers has about 20 members.

Source three advised that the BOP attempts to create pride in black identity, attempts to teach and promote the teaching of Negro history, and to promote black culture and obtain more employment for young Negroes.

The Executive Secretary of BOP is Charles Laverne Cabbage.

On February 16, 1968, Charles Laverne Cabbage personally acknowledge being leader of BOP, claiming he is the impetus of black power in Memphis, Tennessee, and that BOP's purpose is to stimulate in the young Negroes a sense of black identity, black pride, and black consciousness. He said his group follows the teachings of Student Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee (SNCC) leaders H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael but that BOP did not necessarily exist as a formal SNCC unit. CABBAGE further admitted he had made statements such as "Memphis should be burned" and "Memphis should have a good race riot," but claimed he did not mean these statements literally, merely endeavoring to shock the community into doing something to help the black race.

On February 27, 1968, a fourth source advised that at a public meeting on February 26, 1968, the EOP Chairman John Burrell Smith told a Negro audience, "We've got to do some fighting," and "You'd better get some guns. You're going to need them before this is over. You can't pray your way out."

On June 6, 1968, the fourth source advised that EOP primarily consists of about 30 to 35 young college and high school students and school dropouts, unemployed and not looking for work, who continually preach hatred of the white race and capitalistic economic system and advocating and predicting violence by blacks. The over-all plan of EOP, according to source four, is to scare the Memphis community leaders, both black and white, into fearing black militancy. The BOP leaders then hope to convince the community to fund them as a form of subtle blackmail whereby BOP can prevent racial violence. Source four said that EOP is more interested in publicity and money than in direct action, but is nevertheless preaching violence in an effort to scare the community.



*In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Memphis, Tennessee
November 21, 1968

Title James Earl Ray, Aka.;
 Dr. Martin Luther King, Victim

Character Civil Rights - Conspiracy

Reference Memorandum dated November 21, 1968,
 and captioned as above.

All sources (except any listed below) whose identities are concealed in referenced communication have furnished reliable information in the past.