April 5, 1968

GENERAL INVESTIGATIV DIVISION

This is the case involving the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The attached related to two letters written by James Earl Ray to Judge W. Preston Battle (died of a heart attack 3-31-69).

Ray's new attorney, Richard Ryan, is not identifiable in the files of the Bureau or Memphis,

You will be kept advised of pertinent developments.

The Department being advised.

REL:jms

5680

FBI

Date: 4/1/69

Transmit the following in _____ (Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AM (Priority)

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

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) P

MURKIN

On 4/1/69, Executive Assistant District Attorney ROBERT K. DWYER, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that the death of Judge W. PRESTON BATTLE may have some influence on RAY's efforts to obtain a new trial. Mr. DWYER explained that RAY has written two letters to Judge BATTLE in which he has indicated that his new attorney is one RICHARD RYAN, a Memphis attorney, and he has requested of Judge BATTLE a "hearing" on his recent sentencing. Mr. DWYER explained that when a Judge dies suddenly all motions then pending before him are granted automatically. He said that RAY's request for a "hearing" may very well be construed as constituting a motion filed by RAY, and in this case RAY will be granted a hearing. Mr. DWYER said it is too early to tell whether this will be considered as a request for a hearing for a new trial, or possibly a habeas corpus hearing. He said he expects that RAY's new attorney will file a motion for a new trial, this being entirely proper under Tennessee law.

Memphis indices contain nothing identifiable with RICHARD RYAN. RYAN is a little known lawyer with no particular reputation as either a criminal or civil lawyer. He is not commonly known as a racist and members of the legal profession are at a loss to explain why RAY has retained him.

The Bureau will be kept advised of any motions filed by RYAN on RAY's behalf.

3 BUREAU (AM)
1 MEMPHIS
RGJ:BN
(4)

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4/3/69

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge