

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

NY 100-111111

RE: 100-111111

Ann. Ad, Civil Rights Div. SASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Rev. James Bevel, official of SCLC in Philadelphia, Pa. appeared on TV program in Phila. 1/10/68 & stated had evidence that James Earl Ray did not kill King. Bevel referred 1/21/68 & stated had proof of innocence of Ray.

(b)(1)

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131-63

CLASS. & EXT. BY 8175 MW 3/28/80
REASON FOR EXT. 25X(2)
DATE OF REVIEW 3/28/90

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Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division
Director, FBI

January 23, 1969

1 - Mr. Long

ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Reverend James Bevel, an official of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, appeared on a television program in Philadelphia on January 19, 1969, and stated he has evidence that James Earl Ray did not kill Martin Luther King, Jr. He refused to divulge the evidence to the television interviewer, but said he had offered to defend Ray in court although he was not a licensed attorney.

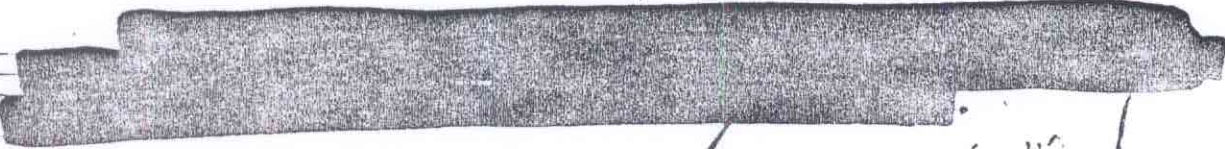
Reverend James Bevel was interviewed at his residence in Philadelphia on January 21, 1969. He stated he was extremely busy as he had appointments through 11 p. m. He stated that he had proof of the innocence of James Earl Ray and since the FBI was the prosecutor and he was involved with the defense, he felt he should not furnish the information. It was pointed out to him that the FBI did not prosecute anyone but always made every effort to obtain all facts available in matters of investigative interest to this Bureau. He stated he sent a telegram to Ray on Saturday, January 18, 1969, and as yet had received no answer. He stated he plans to call Percy Foreman, attorney for Ray, and offer his services. He stated he would contact our Agents and advise if Mr. Foreman has accepted his offer. Reverend James Bevel stated if Mr. Foreman does not accept his offer, he plans to drop the entire matter as he feels he has no moral obligation toward James Earl Ray to produce his evidence of Ray's innocence if his offer of help is refused.

MAILED 3
JAN 23 1969
COMM. FBI

REC-24

Reverend James Bevel stated he was at the Lorraine Motel, Memphis, Tennessee, on the ground underneath the balcony at the time Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot. When contacted in April of 1968, he refused to be interviewed.

19 JAN 24 1969



This is for your information.

1 - Assistant Attorney General
Criminal Division

REL:mfd/cs
(5)

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO...

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

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

CONFIDENTIAL

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification