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FEATURE

TIME VALUE: January 2

CBS REPORTS INQUIRY: "The American Assassins:
James Earl Ray and Martin Luther King". . .

ROOM 306

Room 306 of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn., wouldn't have been any different from the rest of the rooms there. It wouldn't have been much different from motel rooms anywhere in the country -- impersonal, efficient, relatively inexpensive, a reflection of the 20th-century mobility of the working class.

You wouldn't think a Nobel Prize winner, or any distinguished person would stay there. One did. On an unseasonably cold April day, he -- the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. -- was shot just outside the door of room 306.

CBS News Correspondent Dan Rather, anchorman and reporter for the CBS REPORTS INQUIRY: "The American Assassins -- James Earl Ray and Martin Luther King," to be broadcast Friday, January 2 (10:00-11:00 PM, PT) on the CBS Television Network, went back to the Lorraine Motel.

"They've tried to make a shrine of sorts out of this place, walling off room 306 -- the room where Dr. King stayed," reports Rather. Inside, Rather finds humble memorabilia of great events in King's life. Outside, he reads the quotations from Genesis that have been put on the

(More)

ADD "THE AMERICAN ASSASSINS". . .the

door, including "They said one to the another, behold, here cometh the dreamer. Let us slay him and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

Room 306 is different from all others now -- because it is "a sort of shrine," because for all of its typicality and commonness, it was made unique, given by tragedy a place in history.

The CBS News presentation does not dwell on the place for very long. The purpose of the broadcast is primarily to answer questions about who 'slew the dream'; less poetically, did James Earl Ray, acting alone, kill the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King? But the image of the place emerges in the broadcast as a symbol of the vast contrasts and contradictions between the nobility of the dreams and the meanness of the realities in the life and the death of the civil rights leader.

The CBS REPORTS INQUIRY: "The American Assassins -- James Earl Ray and Martin Luther King" is the third part of the four-part series investigating the doubts and discrepancies surrounding the killings of the Kennedy brothers, Dr. King and the attempted murder of Gov. George Wallace.

Ernest Leiser is the producer of the January 2 broadcast. Leslie Midgley is the executive producer of the series.