

MARCH 1976  
**CRAWDOODAH**

# OF HOPE IN KING CASE

by Assassination Information Bureau

The act of criticizing the official version of the King assassination has been complicated over the years by the fact that there is no official version. There was no Warren Commission, no government report and, though this may come as a surprise to some, there was no trial.

Instead, at a special hearing held on March 10, 1969, in Memphis, James Earl Ray pleaded guilty. Ray was asked by the judge, "Are you pleading guilty of murder in the first degree in this case because you killed Martin Luther King under such circumstances that it would make you legally guilty of murder in the first degree under the law as explained to you by your lawyer?" Ray's terse reply was, "Yes. Legally, yes." Near the end of this short hearing, Ray dramatically stood up and said he did not want the guilty plea to be misinterpreted to rule out a conspiracy. The judge, somewhat ruffled, repeated the narrow definition of the plea and Ray said, "Yes sir, make me guilty on that." The hearing ended and Ray was shuttled off to a 99-year sentence.

A few days later, Ray asked to change his plea on the grounds that he was coerced by his lawyer, Percy Foreman. Ray is still attempting to overturn that plea and get a trial, and there is some chance that the case will be heard by the Supreme Court in the next year.

It is important to understand that from the time of his arrest at London's Heathrow Airport on June 8, 1968, Ray has always maintained that he was unwittingly part of a conspiracy to kill King. Ray escaped from a Missouri prison in 1967 where he was doing time for burglary. He made his way to Montreal where he claims to have met a dope smuggler named Raoul who offered Ray money and phony I.D. in exchange for Ray's services. Ray was to go to certain places and perform certain tasks and ask no questions.

Ray went to Birmingham and bought a car for \$2,000, a white Mustang. He then made his made to Mexico, to Puerto Vallarta, where he lived the good life for a few months. Then to L.A. where he attended bartending school, took dancing lessons and placed dirty ads in the *Free Press*. His only trip during this time was to New Orleans, to meet Raoul. (Ray's travels and activities have been verified by author William Bradford Huie, who



Again, the photo of the "tramp," taken on Nov. 22, 1963, Dealey Plaza, Dallas. The drawing is based on initial eyewitness accounts of a man seen running down the stairs of the rooming house in Memphis (alleged to be Ray). Yet the sketch looks nothing like the accused assassin. The FBI apparently produced the photo of the "tramp" and gave it to Ray's lawyer, Percy Foreman, who then showed it to Ray. Ray refused to identify anyone, but did say, "He does look like the party I was involved with."

tracked down hotel receipts and other evidence.)

At the end of March, 1968, Ray left L.A. and went to New Orleans. On March 22, he was in Selma, Alabama. Then to Atlanta. Then to Birmingham on March 28, where he said Raoul instructed him to buy a rifle that was given back to Raoul. On April 2, he was in Corinth, Miss., two hours below Memphis. Inexplicably, on April 3, Ray went to Florence, Alabama, and April 4 he came back to Memphis. Ray has told Huie, and his current lawyer, Bud Fensterwald, that on instructions from Raoul he checked into a rooming house at 422½ S. Main. Raoul met him, told him that he needed the room to negotiate with a gunman, told Ray to go downtown for a while and be back at six. When Ray returned, the rooming house was swarmed over with police. As he sped away in the white Mustang, Ray said he heard on the radio a report of the King shooting and realized for the first time that he was involved with the assassins.

The state claimed that Ray fired one shot from the bathroom at the rooming house which killed King, who was standing on the balcony of the nearby Loraine Motel. Grace Walden, a resident of the rooming house, saw a man running from the bathroom after the shooting, who she described as being about 5'7", 125 lbs.—much smaller and thinner than Ray. Interestingly, when Ray's white Mustang was found, it contained clothing several sizes too small for Ray. Police were unable to

find Ray's fingerprints in his room at the rooming house, the bathroom, or the white Mustang.

After the shooting, a bundle was dumped in the doorway of a building near the rooming house. The bundle contained a rifle—traceable to Ray and smeared with Ray's fingerprints—binoculars, and a radio engraved with Ray's number from the Missouri prison, which greatly facilitated the hunt. Ray protests that this was planted to incriminate him.

From the time of his escape from prison until his arrest, Ray spent between \$15,000 and \$25,000. The FBI claimed Ray got the money from robberies, though this was never documented. Large questions remain about the King shooting, and perhaps the largest is why the government has not been asking them.

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America is again denied the truth of assassination politics. Sara Moore, would-be assassin of President Ford, has pleaded guilty and will forego the unpleasantness of the judicial process. In doing so, she has left unanswered many critical questions surrounding her informant/revolutionary past. Further mysteries developed as U.S. District Judge Samuel Conti questioned Ms. Moore on the wisdom of her plea. When asked if she was influenced by anyone to kill Ford, prior to September 22, she replied, "I'm not going to answer that question." Conti, in a fit of unprecedented indifference, suggested she simply tell her probation officer anything she might have to say.

# CRAWDOODAH

## ... and now: SHORTSHOTS ...



### Suicide Nipped In The Bud

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (ZNS)—A University of Michigan scientist who last year discovered that plants commit suicide, now says he knows how the plants kill themselves, although he doesn't know why. Professor Larry Nooden, studying under a Department of Agriculture research grant, says he found that plants that want to end it all release what he calls a "killer hormone." He says the hormone spreads throughout the plant, causing a color change and eventual death. Nooden says the hormone appears usually at the time the plants begin to flower or develop pods. Why plants off themselves, Nooden says, "remains a mystery."

*Three months ago, a New York handwriting expert announced that she had discovered that all 56 signatures on the Declaration of Independence had been signed by just one person. Graphoanalyst Mollie Freedman now reports that she has determined, through handwriting comparisons, the true identity of that super-patriot: Benjamin Franklin. Freedman reports that her husband had uncovered previously unknown historical records written by Franklin and that Franklin's handwriting indicates that he not only wrote the Declaration but signed every name on it, including John Hancock's. The reason for the forgery, Mollie Freedman explains, is that the delegates to the original Continental Congress feared for their lives and so convinced the aging Franklin to sign all their names, knowing that if they were later captured by the British they could insist under oath that their signatures on the Declaration were fakes.*

—Zodiac News Service

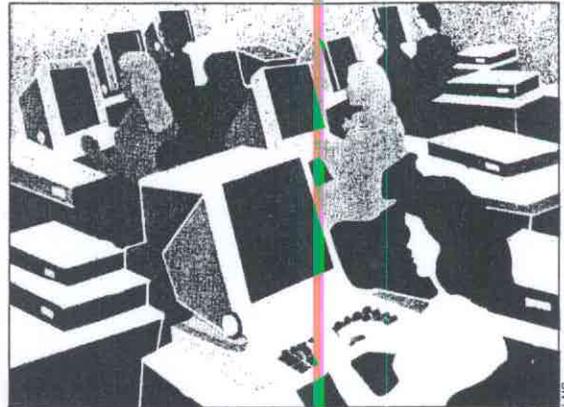
A New Jersey job consultant to MANPOWER has just released a list of what he terms the 10 Most Boring Occupations in America. According to consultant Ray Walters, they are: assembly line worker; elevator operator in a push button elevator; typist in an office typing pool; bank guard; copying machine operator; key-punch operator; highway toll collector; car washer in a tunnel; file clerk; and housewife.

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CHICAGO (ZNS)—Nearly 100 motorists helped themselves to free gasoline and cigarettes at a service station after the station's operators were tied up by burglars. According to police, two attendants at the E-Z Go station were bound and gagged by three robbers who took money and gasoline before fleeing. Robbery investigator David Olsen says that, after the thieves left, "there was a steady stream of customers. They looked in, saw [the attendants] tied up, and helped themselves to gas and cigarettes and just drove away."

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ANN ARBOR, Mich. (New York Times)—The head of a scientific team studying the Africanized honeybee—the aggressive insect that has been spreading northward through South America since its accidental introduction



into Brazil in 1957—said last month that it would probably not reach the U.S. until 1988 or the early 1990s. Three years ago, a National Research Council study estimated that the bees—the subject of much speculation, myth and fear—might arrive in this country by 1981. The bees are known for occasionally attacking men or animals en masse and have been moving north at a rate of about 200 miles a year.

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LONDON (ZNS)—A research group here is out with a warning that lobsters and crabs, which are often boiled alive by cooks to "keep the flavor," are experiencing absolutely agonizing deaths. The Humane Education Center, armed with a new scientific study by Dr. John Baker of Oxford University, announced last month that lobsters and crabs react just like human beings would under the circumstances, and suggest a new stun tank, which uses electric current to render the creatures unconscious, as the most viable alternative to shellfish sadism.

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LONDON (ZNS)—And now, the ultimate assassin-proof limousine. The new auto is an 11-ton vehicle designed by a small British firm. It comes complete with aluminum armor from the British Army's scorpion tank, 4-inch thick glass and a 50-caliber roof-mounted machine gun.

*The Manchester Guardian reports that the "Panther BMRV" (Bullet-and-Mine-Resistant-Vehicle) has been sold to representatives of an unnamed South American president identified by officials only as "El Supremo."*

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MIAMI (AP)—A federal jury has ordered Riddell Inc., a Chicago football helmet manufacturer, to pay \$5.3 million in damages to a Miami youth named Greg Stead who was paralyzed in a high school football game, Sept. 21, 1971. "Great, man," said Stead from a wheelchair.

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MADRID (Reuters)—Chilean President Augusto Pinochet said here yesterday there are no political prisoners in Chile. Pinochet told a press conference: "We have no political prisoners. We have 'political internal exiles.'"

