THE PRESIDENCY.

FKING (contains exclusive naterial) (3 takes) ± FBy RONALD J. OSTROW±



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MASHINGTON - For Courtney Evans; the FBI's liaison with former RTTY. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy; anxiety over the fate of the 1963 civil rights bill has "the principal notive" behind Kennedy's authorization for hiretapping Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

For Nicholas DeB. Katzenbach; Kennedy's successor at the Department of Justice; the tapping has a "sop" to then FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover; who on Kennedy's orders had mithdrawn from circulation a highly critical and accusatory FBI neho about King.

For Stanley D. Levison; a longtime associate of King and the han Hoover claimed has a Communist influence on the civil rights leader; the reason has the Kennedy administration's nervousness resulting from the razor-thin hargin by which John F. Kennedy hon

THE MOTIVES THAT LAY BEHIND KENNEDY'S OCT. 18, 1963, AUTHORIZATION FOR MIRETAPPING KING MAY NEVER BE FULLY RECOLVED. BUT WHILE THE MOTIVATION CANNOT BE MAILED DOWN DEFINITIVELY; INTERVIENS MITH FORMER KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AND THE PARTIAL RECORDS MADE PUBLIC BY THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE'S STUDY OF THE FBI AND KING ALLON CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN.

THEY ARE THAT ROBERT KENNEDY THOUGHT HE HAD NATIONAL

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THEY ARE THAT ROBERT KENNEDY THOUGHT HE HAD NATIONAL SECURITY GROUNDS FOR MIRETAPPING KING: A BASIS FOR THAT KIND OF INVESTIGATION 12 YEARS AGO. IN THE PRE-MATERGATE DAYS WHEN THE FBI'S SUMMARY OF FACTS WAS ACCEPTED WITH LITTLE QUESTION: KENNEDY DID NOT ATTEMPT TO CHECK THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST KING'S ASSOCIATES BY HORE CONVENTIONAL MEANS.

FURTHERMORE: THE CONCLUSION IS INESCAPABLE THAT POLITICAL CONCERNS:

PARTICULARLY THE FEAR THAT DAMAGING DISCLOSURES ABOUT KING COULD

SCUTTLE THE ADMINISTRATION'S CIVIL RIGHTS BILL: ALSO CONTRIBUTED

TO ROBERT KENNEDY'S DECISION TO TAP KING.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate connittee's examination of the FBI's extensive electronic monitoring of King has brought to light bightficant new information about the surveillance.

THERE ARE THESE KEY ITEMS:

THE F81 APPRRENTLY USED THE WORDING OF KENNEDY'S

RUTHORIZATIONS FOR TAPS ON KING'S SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

CONFERENCE OFFICES IN NEW YORK AND ATLANTA AND HIS ATLANTA HOME

AS THE BASES FOR FIVE OTHER TAPS - THREE OF THEN ON MOTEL OR MOTEL

ROOMS WHERE KING WAS STRYING. THE AUTHORIZATIONS PREPARED

FOR KENNEDY'S SIGNATURE BY THE F81s PERMITTED THE BUREAU TO "PLACE

A TECHNICAL SURVEILLANCE ON KING AT HIS CURRENT ADDRESS OR AT ANY

FUTURE ADDRESS TO WHICH HE HAY MOVE."

-DESPITE KENNEDY'S INSTRUCTION THAT THE TAPS NERE TO BE INSTALLED ON A TRIAL BASIS AND REEVALUATED IN 30 DAYS: THERE

ON A TRIAL BASIS AND REEVALUATED IN 30 DAYS: THERE
IS NO INDICATION THAT THE REEVALUATION WAS CONDUCTED. INSTEAD: THE
TAPS WERE LEFT RUNNING.

-Levisons whose "Communist influence" was at the heart of the FBI's stated reason for wanting to tap Kings was found by the FBI's New York office to be "not now under CP (Communist Party) biscipline in the civil rights field." Hoover did not relay this information to Evans or Kennedy.

THE FIRM ANSHER ON WHAT MOTIVATED KENNEDY'S DECISION TO AUTHORIZE

THE WIRETAPPING APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN PLACED BEYOND REACH WITH ROBERT

KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION. THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

INTERVIENED KENNEDY'S SIX CLOSEST ASSOCIATES IN THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AT THE TIME OF THE WIRETAPPING; PERSONS WITH WHON THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HIGHT WELL HAVE DISCUSSED THE DECISION; AND NONE RECALLED KENNEDY'S DISCUSSING THE THORNY QUESTION IN ADVANCE.

But the Senate conhittee's investigation into King and the F81; as nell as recollections of some of Kennedy's Justice Department Colleagues; does allow more of the King hiretapping puzzle to be assembled than has possible earlier.

KENNEDY'S DECISION SHOULD BE VIENED IN THE COLD WAR CONTEXT OF 1963, WHEN THE NATION'S NERVES HERE PUT FURTHER ON EDGE BY THE CIVIL RIGHTS HOVEHENT'S FIGHT FOR BLACK EQUALITY.

On June 19: 1963: PRESIDENT KENNEDY SENT CONGRESS HIS 1963
CIVIL RIGHTS MESSAGE: NHICH PROPOSED ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

On June 19, 1963, President Kennedy sent Congress his 1963

CIVIL RIGHTS HESSAGE, WHICH PROPOSED ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

IN VOTING, SCHOOLS, EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS. THE MESSAGE

WAS SUBMITTED AGAINST A BACKDROP OF HOUNTING RACIAL VIOLENCE IN

THE SOUTH.

BY THAT TIME, ACCORDING TO KATZENBACH, WHO WAS THEN DEPUTY ATTORNEY.

GENERAL, KING HAD "EMERGED AS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL CIVIL RIGHTS

LEADER IN THIS COUNTRY."

PRESIDENT AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL - SYMPATHIZED WITH AND SUPPORTED

OR. KING'S DRAXATIC EFFORTS TO DEHONSTRATE THE EXTENT OF DISCRIMINATION

IN THIS COUNTRY AND TO RIGHT THOSE WRONGS; ** KATZENBACH SAID.

UNKNOWN TO THE PUBLIC; HOWER; ROBERT KENNEDY WAS RECEIVING A

STREAK OF MEMORANDA FROM THE FBI MARNING THAT KING WAS EXPOSED TO

COMMUNIST INFLUENCE.

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EDNIN 8. GUTHMAN, THEN KENNEDY'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR

PUBLIC INFORMATION, RECALLED THAT THE FBI'S MAIN ALLEGATION

WAS THAT KING HAD CONTACT WITH A MAN WHO WAS A SECRET MEMBER

OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, U.S.A.

ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN IDENTIFED ONLY AS Mr. X OR Mr. A

BURING THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE HEARINGS, THE INDIVIDUAL

WAS LEVISON, WHO DENIES EVER BEING A COMMUNIST.

THE F81 ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN TO KENNEDY ABOUT JACK O'DELLS

R SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE STAFF MEMBERS

CONTENDING HE HAD COMMUNIST CONNECTIONS.

THESE ACCUSATIONS WERE "LESS SERIOUS" THAN THOSE AGAINST LEVISONS ACCORDING TO FORMER JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WHO SAW OR HEARD THEM.

KING HAD WRITTEN O'DELL IN 1963 THAT AN INVESTIGATION BY THE SCLC HAD UNCOVERED NO CONNECTIONS ON HIS PART WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

O'DELL COULD NOT BE REACHED BY THE TIMES FOR COMMENT.

BURKE MARSHALL: NHO HEADED THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S CIVIL RIGHTS

BIVISION UNDER KENNEDY: SAID THE INFORMATION THE FBI GAVE HIM ON

THE TWO MEN (MARSHALL NON'T USE THEIR NAMES BECAUSE ME NON DISTRUSTS

THE FBI INFORMATION) WAS "VERY SPECIFIC: NOT VAGUE OR GENERAL."!

""I HOULD NOT HAVE PAID VERY MUCH ATTENTION TO VAGUE ACCUSATIONS OF MARXIST LEANINGS OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT:" SAID MARSHALL: NON

"ARXIST LEANINGS OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT;" SAID MARSHALL; NOW

BEPUTY DEAN OF THE YALE LAW SCHOOL.

Ce

GUTHMAN, NOW NATIONAL EDITOR OF THE TIMES, SAID THE FBI STRESSED THE SENSITIVITY OF ITS INFORMATION ON LEVISON.

RN INDIVIDUAL WAS A SECRET HERBER (OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY) IT HOULD EXPOSE A SEXRET SOURCE (OF THE FBI): " GUTHMAN SAID.

THE FBI'S SENSITIVITY CONTINUES TODAY. TESTIFYING LAST HONTH BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE: JAMES B. ADAMS: ASSISTANT TO THE BIRECTOR OF THE FBI: SAID HE COULD NOT BISCUSS IN OPEN SESSION THE BASIS FOR INVESTIGATING KING.

ON THE BASIS THAT THERE IS CERTAIN INFORMATION WHICH TODAY: FROM AN ONGOING OPERATION: IS SENSITIVE."

LEISON: IN AN INTERVIEW: SAID HE BELIEED ALLEGATIONS THAT

HE HAD SECRET COMMUNIST PARTY AFFILIATIONS HERE HADE TO THE

FBI BY A FORMER BUSINESS ASSOCIATE WHO: LEVISON CONTENDED: WAS TRYING

TO CLEAR HIMSELF WITH THE FBI IN THE 1950s.

LEISON SAID THE FORMER ASSOCIATE WAS "CLINICALLY SICK;" AND
THAT HE THUS DID NOT WANT TO REKINDLE THE MAN'S ANTAGONISH BY
IDENTIFYING HIM. LEVISON HIMSELF HAS SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK AND
ALSO IS ILL WITH CANCER AND DIABETES.

THE FBI'S CONCERNS OVER KING'S ASSOCIATES HAS RAISED

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NITH KING BY BURKE MARSHALL IN A JUNE OR JULY: 1963; CONVERSATION;

RECOULT THE TIME OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S CIVIL RIGHTS HESSAGE; MARSHALL

RECALLED IN AN INTERVIEW. THIS WAS THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF SUCH

CONVERSATIONS WITH KING OR HIS AIDES; MARSHALL SAID.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND ATTY. GEN. KENNEDY ALSO HAD A SIMILAR DISCUSSION WITH KING: URGING HIM TO "TAKE SERIOUSLY" THE WARNING CONVEYED BY MARSHALL.

KING'S FAMILY LAWYER, HARRY WACHTEL, SAID KING FOLLOWED THE KENNEDYS'
RECOMMENDATIONS. O'DELL WAS DISCHARGED BY THE SCLC AND THE CLOSE
RELATIONSHIP HITH LEVISON WAS SEVERED, AT LEAST FOR A WHILE.
AUTHOR VICTOR S. NAVASKY IN HIS 1971 BOOK; "KENNEDY JUSTICE;"
PUBLISHED A JULY 3: 1963; LETTER THAT KING SENT TO O'DELL. KING
WROTE THAT A THOROUGH INQUIRY INTO CHARGES THAT O'DELL HAD COMMUNIST
AFFILIATIONS HAD TURNED UP NO SUCH "PRESENT CONNECTIONS." BUT KING
ADDED THAT SCLC'S ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE HAD DECIDED TO ASK
O'DELL TO MAKE HIS TEMPORARY RESIGNATION PERMANENT.

RESPONSE WHICH NOULD SEEN TO INDICATE THAT SCLC AND THE SOUTHERN

FREEDON NOVEMENT ARE COMMUNIST-INSPIRED. IN THESE CRITICAL TIMES WE

CANNOT AFFORD TO RISK ANY SUCH IMPRESSIONS: KING WROTE.

LEVISON RECALLED THE BREAK WITH KING CAME EARLIER THAN THE CIVIL

RIGHTS MESSAGE - AND CONTENDED THAT IT WAS AT HIS OWN BEHEST.

THEIR CLOSE TIES HERE BROKEN "FROM PROBABLY LATE 1962 THROUGH 1963;"

THEIR CLOSE TIES HERE BROKEN "FROM PROBABLY LATE 1962 THROUGH 1963,"
LEVISON SAID.

STADUT RELIBERED INE PRENE WIID RIND LONG ENGLIER INDO INC LIVIL

LEVISON SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED TO PROVIDE KING WITH ANY EVIDENCE THAT HE WAS A COMMUNIST: AND THAT KING THUS REFUSED TO PROVISE HE HOULD END THEIR RELATIONSHIP.

LEVISON SAID HE CITED TO KING THE THIN MARGIN BY WHICH JOHN KENNEDY

HON ELECTION AND TOLD KING: "I DON'T THINK IT'S SUCH A DREADFUL

THING IF HE SEPARATE: " HE SAID HE TOLD KING. "HE WAS HARD TO

PERSUADE: BUT HE FINALLY AGREED."

DURING THE NEXT 18 HONTHS: HONEVER: LEVISON SAID HE AND KING WERE IN TOUCH ABOUT HATTERS THAT HAD BEEN PENDING WHEN THEY WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS.

ON ONE SUCH OCCASION, HE SAID, HE TOLD KING THAT THEY HERE

""BRIFTING TOGETHER." LEISON SAID KING THEN TOLD HIN HE HAD DECIDED

THEY HOULD RENEW THEIR RELATIONSHIP "IN THE OPEN" BECAUSE THE

GOVERNMENT HAD PRODUCED NO EVIDENCE OF LEVISON'S ALLEGED LINK WITH

COMMUNISH.

HEANTINE: AROUND THE TIME OF THE 1963 CIVIL RIGHTS MESSAGE:

THE FBI CONTINUED TO SEND ROBERT KENNEDY WORD THAT KING AND LEVISON

NERE STILL IN CONTACT NITH ONE ANOTHER.

IN A JULY 16: 1963: HEHORANDUM THAT EVANS SENT AN FBI SUPERIOR:

HE TOLD OF A CONVERSATION HE HAD NITH KENNEDY IN WHICH THE ATTORNEY

FENERAL BENER BROWT THE BOSCIETI ITY OF DIRECTORDING KING DUR. IN AN

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IN A JULY 16: 1963: HEHORANDUM THAT EVANS SENT AN FBI SUPERIOR:

HE TOLD OF A CONVERSATION HE HAD NITH KENNEDY IN WHICH THE ATTORNEY

GENERAL ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF NIRETAPPING KING AND: IN AN

RPPARENT REFERENCE TO LEVISON: THE ALLEGED SOURCE OF COMMUNIST

INFLUENCE.

EVANS: TESTIFYING BEFORE THE SENATE CONNITTEE: SAID HE TOLD KENNEDY
THAT KING TRAVELED A GREAT DEAL AND THAT HE "DOUBTED FOR THAT
REASON WHETHER EFFECTIVE SURVEILLANCE OF HIS HOME OR OFFICE NOULD
BE VERY PRODUCTIVE."

(MORE TO COME)

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Evans, referring to the memorandum of his conversation with Kennedy, said he also questioned what the repercussions hould be if existence of the miretap eer becaxe known.

EVANS NROTE IN HIS 1963 MEMORANDUM; "THAT IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN THE RACIAL SITUATION; HE THOUGHT IT ROVISABLE TO HAVE AS COMPLETE COVERAGE AS POSSIBLE. I TOLD HIM; UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES; THAT HE HOULD CHECK INTO THE HATTER TO SEE IF COVERAGE HAS FEASIBLE; AND IF SO HOULD SUBHIT AN APPROPRIATE RECORDERDATION TO HIM."

IN A RECENT INTERVIEW; EVANS EXPLAINED THAT HE DID NOT THINK
KENNEDY WAS REALLY SIGNALING HIS LACK OF CONCERN OVER REPERCUSSIONS
THAT PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THE HIRETAP HIGHT HAVE!

""I THINK AT THE TIME HE HAD MADE UP HIS MIND;" EVANS SAID.

""LET'S FACE IT. HOOVER HAS COUNSELING HIM ONE WAY; AND I WAS
TRYING TO HAVE SOME RESTRAINING EFFECT HERE. I THINK THIS WAS JUST
HIS WAY OF DISHISSING MY EFFORT TO TRY AND MODIFY THE POSITION."

BUT NIME DAYS LATER AFTER HIS CONVERSATION WITH KENNEDY - ON JULY 25;

1963 - EVANS FILED ANOTHER HEND SAYING KENNEDY TOLD HIM HE

WHAT CHANGED KENNEDY'S MIND? ONE POSSIBILITY IS THAT KENNEDY BECAME

BATISFIED THAT KING HAD SEVERED HIS SUSPECT RELATIONS.

AMOTHER POSSIBILITY IN BRICED BY & Tong 77 - 4077

WHAT CHANGED KENNEDY'S MIND? ONE POSSIBILITY IS THAT KENNEDY BECAME SATISFIED THAT KING HAD SEVERED HIS SUSPECT RELATIONS.

Another possibility is raised by a July 22, 1963; letter that Kennedy wrote Sen. R. S. (Mike) Monroney (D-Okla.) and other senators who had asked the FBI about charges hade at a senate hearing that the Communist Party was exploiting the nation's racial problems.

THE LETTER: APPROVED BY HOOVER: READ IN PART:

"BASED ON ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION FROM THE F81 AND OTHER SOURCES;
WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY OF THE TOP LEADERS OF THE
MAJOR CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS ARE COMMUNISTS; OR COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED.
THIS IS TRUE AS TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING; JR.; ABOUT WHOM PARTICULAR
ACCUSATIONS WERE MADE; AS WELL AS OTHER LEADERS.

TO INFILTRATE THE CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS AND TO EXPLOIT THE CURRENT RACIAL SITUATION. IN VIEW OF THE REAL

INJUSTICES THAT EXIST AND THE RESENTMENT AGAINST THEM: THESE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN REMARKABLY UNSUCCESSFUL."!

GUTHMANS RECALLING THE LETTERS SAID IT BECAME "THE BASIC DOCUMENT" FROM NHICH HE AND CARTHA DELOACHS THEN IN CHARGE OF THE FBI'S PUBLIC RELATIONSS NORMED FROM NHEN THE QUESTION OF COMMUNIST INFILTRATION OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS HOVEHENT WAS RAISED.

KENNEDY'S FIRM DECLARATION IN THE LETTER; WHICH HE SAID DREW ON "ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION FROM THE FBI AND OTHER SOURCES;" SEEMS ON "ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION FROM THE F81 AND OTHER SOURCES;" SEEMS CONSISTENT WITH HIS CHANGE OF MIND ABOUT WIRETAPPING KING.

BUT THREE MONTHS LATER; ON OCT. 10 AND OCT. 21; 1963; KENNEDY APPROVED TAPS REQUESTED BY THE F81 ON KING'S ATLANTA HOME AND THE SCLC OFFICE IN NEW YORK AND ATLANTA.

SITURTIONS IT IS REQUESTED THAT AUTHORITY BE GRANTED TO PLACE A TECHNICAL SURVEILLANCE ON KING AT HIS CURRENT ADDRESS OR AT ANY FUTURE ADDRESS TO WHICH HE HAY HOVES!! HOOVER'S REQUEST FOR ONE OF THE WIRETAPS READ.

THE DOCUMENTS NERE STAXPED "NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION" AND NERE HEADED NITH THE NOTATION: "RE: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SECURITY NATIER - CONMUNIST"

BELOW THAT WAS THE NOTATION, BLSG IN CAPITALS: "CONHUNIST INFLUENCE IN RACIAL MATTERS."

GUTHHAMS RECALLING A DISCUSSION HE HAD NITH ROBERT KENNEDY AFTER THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE KING MIRETAPPING BECAME AN ISSUE IN KENNEDY'S BID FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL MOMINATION IN 1968, SAID KENNEDY GAVE THO REASONS FOR IT.

KENNEDY TOLD GUTHMAN THAT THE TAPPING NOULD HELP TO SETTLE THE EVESTION OF COMMUNIST INFILTRATION WHICH THE FBI KEPT RAISING. HE ALSO SAID THAT IF HE HAD NOT APPROVED THE WIRETAPS: "HOOVER HOULD HOVE HORE OPENLY TO KILL THE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL:" GUTHMAN SAID.

KATZENBACH; HONEVER; DIB NOT ASSOCIATE THE DIBETARNALE

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RUESTION OF COMMUNIST INFILTRATION WHICH THE FBI KEPT RAISING. HE

ALSO SAID THAT IF HE HAD NOT APPROVED THE WIRETAPS: "Hoover would

NOVE MORE OPENLY TO WILL THE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL:" GUTHMAN SAID.

KATZENBACH: HOWEVER: DID NOT ASSOCIATE THE WIRETAPPING WITH

PROSPECTS FOR CONGRESS' ACTING ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S CIVIL RIGHTS

PROGRAM.

DHIS DENNED! BUYE INV DENSON

INSTEAD: KATZENBACH LINKS THE AUTHORIZATION NITH A MEMORANDUM HOOVER

PREPARED ON KING "REFERRING TO THE FACT OF COMMUNIST INFILTRATION

INTO THE MOVEMENT AND DISCUSSING QUESTIONS OF MORAL CHARACTER."

HOOVER GAVE THE MEMO HIDE CIRUCLATION IN THE GOVERNMENT; WHICH

KATZENBACH SAID HADE KENNEDY "FURIOUS." THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

"BIRECTED HR. HOOVER TO NITHDRAW ALL COPIES OF THE MEMORANDUM TO OTHER

DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND NOT TO CIRCULATE IT FURTHER;"

KATZENBACH SAID.

HE SAID KENNEDY THEN APPROVED THE NIRETAPPING AUTHORIZATION "AS A KIND OF SOP! TO HOOVER. "YOU KNOWS "PUT IT ONS THEN NE'LL REVIEW IT. YOU'LL SEE THERE'S NOTHING TO ITS! AND THAT WILL BE THE END OF THE MATTER."!