

Doubts remain in King death

It was almost startling to read the headline over a dispatch in The Inquirer the other day:

**FBI Cleared
In Slaying
Of Dr. King**

Not long ago, anyone who raised a question as to the possible complicity of this once-respected law enforcement agency in the 1964 slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would have been regarded as a certifiable paranoid.

Now, the question could not only be raised but had to be answered by a review, forthrightly ordered by U.S. Attorney General Edward H. Levi, of the FBI's investigation of Dr. King's death. For we have learned, from the work of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, that the FBI had, for several years prior to the civil rights leader's death, been engaged in a lawless campaign to "destroy" him, even to the extent of trying to persuade him to commit suicide.

That campaign, ordered by the late Director J. Edgar Hoover, continued right up to the moment of Dr. King's death, and even after. And in view of further evidence of government activities in plotting assassinations of for-

eign leaders, a careful look into the King assassination no longer seems absurd.

If the FBI has been cleared of having directly or indirectly caused Dr. King's death, as a Justice Department official declares, some of the other questions about the case remain unanswered.

It is not that James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty and is now serving a 99-year sentence, has claimed that he took the rap for someone else, unnamed. That kind of claim by a prisoner is not unusual. But what was the motive? How did Ray know that Dr. King was staying in the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, where he had gone to give support to a strike of mostly black garbage men? And how did Ray, whose criminal record up to then was devoid of imagination, manage to make such an imaginative escape from Memphis to Toronto to Lisbon to London?

Dr. King's widow says she now believes there was a "conspiracy" in the death of her husband but concedes she has no facts to justify her belief. Possibly no new evidence will be uncovered, but every effort must be made to satisfy the legitimate doubts surrounding the case.

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