

leader of the civil rights movement. If he was important to Hoover, it followed that King should be important to his people, more important than other black leaders who were ignored by Hoover.

I was convinced that James Earl Ray killed Martin Luther King, but I doubt if he acted alone. Ray was so stupid that I don't think he could have robbed a five- and ten-cent store. He was not only stupid, he was sloppy. He left the rifle he used to shoot King in an alley, and he left beer cans covered with his fingerprints in the trunk of his abandoned car. Ray could have left the gun in his room, or if he was smart he could have opened a hole in the wall and hid it there. He could even have broken the gun down into two pieces and carried it out in a small box, but he was sloppy. And stupid.

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Someone, I feel sure, taught Ray how to get a false Canadian passport, how to get out of the country, and how to travel to Europe because he could never have managed it alone. And how did Ray pay for the passport and the airline tickets? Ray's brother told the FBI, "My brother would never do anything unless he was richly paid."

Thanks to all the clues he'd left we knew we were after Ray, but we had a hell of a time finding his whereabouts. As the weeks passed, the pressure on the FBI to find him grew. Johnson was giving us hell because Ray was a political liability and would remain so until he was in custody. There were rumors about Ray and the FBI: first, people said that we didn't want to find Ray; then they started saying that the FBI itself had a hand in King's murder. We had a lead that Ray had gone to Mexico, but we couldn't find him there or anywhere else.

As a matter of course, I had asked the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to help us find Ray. One night in early June, two months after King was shot, I got a call at home at eleven at night from Bill Kelly, deputy commissioner of the RCMP and a close friend. "I think we've solved your case," he said. The RCMP had painstakingly gone through 250,000 passport applications, checking pictures and handwriting, until they came up with Ray's alias. It worked; they traced him for us from Canada to Portugal (where he had been living with prostitutes) to England. He had tried to rob a bank in England to get some money, but naturally he bungled the job. We asked the British to move in and pick him up, which they did.

At our request, the British forgot about the bank robbery attempt so that we could bring him back to the United States on a murder charge.

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Ray was in custody in London for two days before Hoover released the story to the press. He waited until the day of Bobby Kennedy's funeral to break the news so that the FBI could steal the headline from Kennedy one last time. I told Hoover that we should give the credit for Ray's capture to the RCMP. Hoover said no and the FBI falsely got the credit.

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