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L.A. TIMES 4/30/76  
**Levi Broadens  
Federal Inquiry  
Into King's Death**

**BY RONALD J. OSTROW**  
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WASHINGTON—Atty. Gen. Edward H. Levi said Thursday that a preliminary Department of Justice inquiry had tentatively concluded that the FBI did not in any way cause the death of Dr. Martin Luther King.

But Levi ordered a broadened investigation of the King assassination and the FBI's harassment of the civil rights leader by a special unit recently created to oversee allegations of misconduct by department employees.

In ordering the wider inquiry, which officials said could take months to complete as attorneys examine more than 200,000 documents and conduct interviews at the FBI's 59 field offices, Levi rejected a recommendation that a nongovernment panel do the job.

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That recommendation, by J. Stanley Pottinger, assistant attorney general for civil rights, who directed the preliminary review, was based on the premise that nondepartment investigators would enjoy more credibility.

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Pottinger told reporters that he thought Levi's decision was "appropriate" and showed that "the integrity of the department is strong enough and his personal integrity is strong enough not only to allow this, but indeed to require it."

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The five-month preliminary review, which examined 3,500 documents, was ordered by Levi in November after testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee disclosed that the FBI had waged a

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# BROADER U.S. PROBE OF KING DEATH ORDERED

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campaign to destroy King as a civil rights leader for several years.

The campaign, which included physical, electronic and photographic surveillances, scrutiny of King's tax returns and monitoring of his financial affairs, was branded "indefensible" and "a sad episode in the dark history of covert actions" by the committee in its final report Wednesday.

Pottinger's preliminary inquiry also produced no evidence that the FBI investigation of King's assassination was not thorough or honest, Levi said.

Levi said he ordered the broadened inquiry Monday, directed that it be completed "forthwith" and that it answer these four questions:

—Whether the FBI's investigation of King's assassination was thorough and honest;

—Whether there is any evidence that the FBI was involved in the slaying;

—Whether there is any new evidence on the assassination that has come to the attention of the department;

—Whether the "nature of the relationship between the bureau and Dr. King calls for criminal prosecutions, disciplinary proceedings or other appropriate action."

Pottinger said that his inquiry had determined that the top nine FBI officials responsible for approving, directing or carrying out the extensive campaign against King were all dead or retired.

Pottinger would not identify the nine former officials. But the Senate committee report in documenting the campaign carried footnotes citing memoranda to or from J. Edgar Hoover and his top aide, Clyde Tolson, and such retired FBI officials as William C. Sullivan, Alan Belmont, F. J. Baumgardner and Cartha DeLoach.

Pottinger indicated that the five-year statute of limitations governing most federal crimes made any prosecutions of individuals involved in the campaign against King unlikely.

The Senate committee traced the campaign back to December, 1963, and found that it continued until King's death in 1968.

Pottinger said, however, that if the expanded inquiry established that there was a conspiracy to cover up an illegal act, prosecution on conspiracy charges would be possible. The preliminary review established no reason to believe that such a conspiracy took place, however.

James Earl Ray was arrested for killing King, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 99 years in prison. He has since gone to court in an effort to withdraw his plea and go to trial.

The recommendation by Pottinger for a nongovernment panel to look into the King case was opposed inside the civil rights division by Robert A. Murphy, chief of the division's criminal section and one of the three men who conducted the preliminary review.

Murphy is known to have opposed creation of such a panel on grounds that it would increase the likelihood of highly personal information on King being made public through leaks. That information, which was reviewed during the preliminary inquiry, came from the 15 electronic bugs that the FBI planted in King's hotel rooms around the country.

Investigators for the Senate Intelligence Committee chose not to listen to the King tapes or to review transcripts of them. Instead, they relied on Pottinger's assurance that the tapes did not shed light on the FBI's actions.

Levi directed that the Office of Professional Responsibility, which he established in December, complete the review of the King assassination documents.

The office is headed by Michael E. Shaheen Jr., 35, who served as liaison between the department and the congressional committees investigating the intelligence agencies.

In carrying out his liaison assignment, Shaheen won praise from staff members of the Senate committee who said he maintained a sense of humor during some highly charged

## 'MELTING POT' COINED IN 1908 BY BRITON FOR PLAY

The term "melting pot" was coined by the English playwright Israel Zangwill, who used it as the title of a 1908 drama set in America. Zangwill looked forward to what he called an emerging new creature, "the fusion of all the races, the coming superman."

It was not a new concept. The idea of "melting" the immigrant stocks into a new American breed goes back at least as far as 1782. In that year St. John de Crevecoeur, an American farmer born and brought up in France, wrote, "Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men."

Crevecoeur included in his new race English, Scots, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans and Swedes. More than a century later Zangwill would include Russians and Jews.

negotiating sessions.

Levi's decision to keep the investigation within the department was attacked by the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, who succeeded King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

"I will not be satisfied until the President . . . appoints a special committee of distinguished American citizens who owe no allegiance to anyone except to their country and to justice and to truth," Abernathy said in Atlanta. "I do not have any faith whatsoever in the investigation as conducted by the FBI in the tragic assassination . . ."

In a related development Thursday, FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley issued a statement saying the Senate committee's findings "can be informative and provide constructive assistance to the nation, to the Congress, to the executive branch and to the government's intelligence agencies."

Kelley said he had not yet read the entire report, but would do so. He said he would not be searching for errors or misinterpretations in the report.

"I intend to keep foremost not what is good for the FBI, but what is best for the nation," Kelley said.