

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 8, 1968

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Mrs. BESSIE RUTH BREWER, Resident Manager, rooming house located at 422½ South Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee, was interviewed at Central Police Headquarters, Memphis, Tennessee, Police Department, at which time she furnished the following information:

Between 3:00 P.M. and 3:30 P.M. on April 4, 1968, a white male knocked on the door of the second floor of the rooming house and asked Mrs. BREWER if she had a room. She replied yes, and this individual then asked if he could see it. Mrs. BREWER showed him Room No. 8, which is located in the southwest part of the building, and the individual put his head into the doorway and after looking, stated that this would not be satisfactory as he did not need a stove and refrigerator but only wanted a sleeping room. Mrs. BREWER then showed this individual Room 5-B, and he put his head in the doorway of this room and said it would be fine. At this point the individual asked where the bathroom facilities were located, and she pointed to the bathroom located in the northeast portion of the hallway which is located in the same hallway as Room 5-B. She and this individual then returned to her office. The individual stated that his name was JOHN WILLARD and that he wanted a sleeping room for one week.

WILLARD then asked her how much the room rent would be for one week, and Mrs. BREWER replied \$8.50. WILLARD then put his hand into his right trouser pocket and withdrew a twenty dollar bill and two quarters and handed the money to her. She gave him change in denominations of one ten dollar bill and two one dollar bills. When WILLARD arrived at the rooming house, Mrs. BREWER did not notice any luggage in his possession, nor during the brief conversation with WILLARD did he volunteer any information concerning his home residence, line of business, or mode of transportation. WILLARD was not required to sign any type of register, and the only written record maintained of the transaction was a receipt for the \$8.50, which was made out in the handwriting of Mrs. BREWER.

Mrs. BREWER was unable to state if WILLARD returned

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 by SA ROBERT F. DOYLE: Jap *RFB* Date dictated 4/8/68

to Room 5-B or if he left the building at any time after renting Room 5-B. Mrs. BREWER did not again observe WILLARD after he rented the room.

Mrs. BREWER's husband returned home from work at 5:25 P.M. on April 4, 1968, and at that time Mr. and Mrs. BREWER commenced their dinner. After dinner Mr. BREWER then turned on the television set and was watching the "Rawhide" television program, and Mrs. BREWER did the dinner dishes. Shortly after completing the dinner dishes, Mrs. BREWER also sat down to watch the "Rawhide" television program. Within a matter of a couple of minutes, Mrs. BREWER heard what she thought to be a gun shot coming from the back of her rooming house. Mrs. BREWER believed that this must have been around 6:00 P.M. on April 4, 1968. She advised her husband that she thought it was a gun shot. Her husband took time to put on his slippers and both of them then proceeded to the southeast exit of the building. Upon arriving at this point, Mr. BREWER attempted to go out the back door; however, a law enforcement officer was in the back of the building and instructed both Mr. and Mrs. BREWER to close the door and return to their apartment. Mrs. BREWER did not hear any noise such as someone running through her building after hearing the gun shot, and the only noise she could recall hearing was a lot of hollering and screaming near the back of her building toward the Lorraine Motel.

Mrs. BREWER examined cash that she had on hand and determined that she had three \$20.00 bills in her possession. She was unable to specifically pinpoint which \$20.00 bill was furnished to her by WILLARD for payment of his room rent. Mrs. BREWER made available the following described twenty dollar Federal Reserve Notes:

- (1) Series 1963-A, Serial No. F14002844A
- (2) Series 1963-A, Serial No. H16164663A
- (3) Series 1963, Serial No. F06445143A

Mrs. BREWER furnished the following description of WILLARD:

Race:	White
Sex:	Male
Age:	Approximately 35 years

Height:	5'11" to 6'
Weight:	180 pounds
Build:	Medium (carried weight well)
Appearance:	Real neat looking, clean shaven.

Mrs. BREWER stated that WILLARD appeared to have a smile or a sneer on his face during their entire conversation; did not appear as though he was the outdoors type; was wearing a dark sport jacket or short jacket, as he did not have to pull the jacket back when he reached his right hand into his pocket for his money; did not notice any rings or watches; paid no attention to his shoes, pants, shirt, or whether he had on a tie, but was quite positive that he did not have a hat; did not give the appearance of needing a haircut, nor was he wearing a mustache or any long sideburns; paid no particular attention to his teeth while he was talking and did not particularly notice about any part of his face, including nose, mouth, ears, chin, or eyebrows.

Mrs. BREWER claims that she did not particularly look at this individual as she did not like the smile or sneer that he had on his face.

Mrs. BREWER did recall that when she pointed out the bathroom facilities to WILLARD, she told him that everyone in the area of his room was usually quiet but that the guy next to him usually drinks a little bit. Mrs. BREWER claimed that WILLARD then stated, "I take a beer once in awhile myself." Mrs. BREWER claimed that she told him that was all right as long as he stayed in his room and kept quiet.

Mrs. BREWER was unable to state whether any of the other roomers at her rooming house had an opportunity to either observe or have any contact with WILLARD, nor was she able to furnish any additional information concerning WILLARD's activities during the brief period that he resided at her rooming house. She claims that she does not believe that she would recognize this individual again from a photograph or if she had an opportunity to see him in person, but qualified this by stating that she probably would be able to recognize him from the smile or sneer that he had on his face if she were able to observe that in the future.

She claimed that WILLARD did not volunteer any information concerning his personal background or volunteer any information concerning his reason for being in Memphis. She claimed that WILLARD's speech was "just like the rest of us around here," and that his vocabulary and accent were not out of place in her rooming house. Mrs. BREWER recalled that when WILLARD first looked in Room 8, he remarked that he only wanted a sleeping room as he would not be in the room in the daytime, just at night.