

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/16/68

1

1. Lt. JIMSON EUGENE GHORMLEY, Deputy Sheriff, Shelby County Sheriff's Office, a white male, age 40, residing at 4124 Ronnie Avenue, telephone 386-6034, furnished the following information.

On April 4, 1968, he was assigned to Tactical Unit 10, which consisted of three vehicles and twelve officers, both Deputy Sheriffs and Memphis Police Officers. The Deputy Sheriffs, in addition to GHORMLEY assigned to Tactical Unit 10 were W. J. BEPEY, G. H. BAKER, W. A. DU FOUR, V. V. DOLLAHITE, and R. W. MALEY. Memphis Police Officers assigned to Tactical Unit 10 were Officers BOWLESS, GROSS, DUNN, LANDERS, WRIGHT and MORRIS.

At about 6:00 PM on April 4, 1968, Tactical Unit 10 had stopped at the Memphis Fire Department Engine House located at Main and Butler, about 1/2 block southwest of the Lorraine Motel, and the unit was in that location when a Negro male detective ran into the fire station and stated that Doctor KING had been shot. Upon hearing this, the members of Tactical Unit 10, including GHORMLEY ran east on Butler to Mulberry and north on Mulberry toward the Lorraine Motel. While en route, GHORMLEY observed a number of Negro males and females standing on the balcony of the motel pointing towards a building west of the motel, the front of which was located on S. Main Street.

GHORMLEY saw Officer DU FOUR running up the stairs of the Lorraine Motel toward the balcony where Doctor KING's body was lying. DU FOUR was followed closely by Officer BAKER. DU FOUR and BAKER, in that order, would have been the first officers to reach KING.

GHORMLEY also saw Officer LANDERS scale a wall on the west side of Mulberry Street and enter a back yard, which he later determined to have been behind the buildings known as 418, 422 1/2 and 424 S. Main Street.

On 4/16/68 at Memphis, Tennessee File # ME 44-1987-~~56~~ Sub-D-56
 by SA THOMAS L. BUCKLEY /abs Date dictated 4/16/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

ME 44-1987

Seeing the people on the balcony pointing toward the building on Main Street, Officer GHORMLEY stopped and retraced his steps around the fire station and ran north on Main Street. As he approached the building at 424 S. Main, he noticed a suitcase, blue in color, a rifle box, which was partly open and what appeared to be a blanket lying in the doorway at 424 S. Main. He could see the barrel of a rifle in the rifle box. At this time, a white male whose name he later determined was Mr. CANIPE, came to the door of 424 S. Main and advised him that a white male, who CANIPE described as tall, a little on the heavy side, wearing a dark colored possibly black suit, a shirt and tie, having dark colored hair possibly black, moments before had deposited these articles in the doorway and had then run south on Main Street.

Using his walkie-talkie radio, GHORMLEY advised his dispatcher of the information provided by Mr. CANIPE. He also guarded the articles lying in the doorway so no one would disturb them. Upon talking further to Mr. CANIPE, he learned from CANIPE that shortly after the white male who left the above described articles in CANIPE's doorway, had run south on Main Street, that CANIPE had noticed a white Mustang automobile drive past that location at a high rate of speed headed north on Main. At this time, Officer GHORMLEY again used his radio to advise his dispatcher of this information.

The next officer to arrive at GHORMLEY's location was Officer DOUGLASS, who drove the station wagon assigned to Tactical Unit 10 from its location at the fire station to a location directly in front of 424 S. Main where Officer DOUGLASS double parked the station wagon and aided in guarding the evidence left by the above described white male.

The next officer at this location was Deputy Sheriff V. V. DOLLAHITE, who approached the location from the north on Main Street after having apparently circled the block. About this time, Officers from the Memphis Homicide Squad arrived at the scene and took charge. GHORMLEY estimated the total time lapsed from the time he heard that

E 44-1987

KING had been shot until he discovered the suitcase, gun and blanket, was no more than 2 or 3 minutes. GHORMLEY does not recall seeing a white Mustang parked along the area of S. Main, which he covered during the time immediately following the shooting, neither does he recall seeing anyone running south on Main Street in this same area.

During the incident described above, GHORMLEY was dressed in a khaki colored long sleeve shirt bearing the insignia of the Shelby County Sheriff's Department, and dark green uniform trousers. He was not wearing a hat or helmet. GHORMLEY recalls that Officer LANDERS, whom he saw scaling the wall across from the Lorraine Motel, was dressed in the usual Memphis Police Department uniform consisting of a blue shirt and trousers. Officer LANDERS was not wearing a hat or helmet. GHORMLEY recalls that there were 2 Negro males in Canipe's Amusement Center at the time he was talking to CANIPE. He thinks these person may also have seen the above described white male deposit the gun, suitcase, and blanket in CANIPE's doorway and may also have seen the white Mustang speeding north on S. Main Street in front of CANIPE's store. He does not know the names of these Negroes.