

Select Committee on Assassinations

U.S. House of Representatives

3342 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, ANNEX 2

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

March 9, 1977

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The Honorable Griffin B. Bell
Attorney General
Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20535

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and propose to discuss the following items:

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1) To continue even a threshold investigation, it is necessary that our staff have access to the unclassified materials in the custody of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Consequently, we would appreciate your removing any impediments to these materials.

2) So that we might continue our investigation as expeditiously as possible when reconstituted, it is important that we discuss the procedures for security clearances of our staff, so that we might obtain access to classified materials at the appropriate time.

3) Certain materials are extremely vital which are presently in the custody of the Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, pertaining to the investigation into the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Accordingly, we would respectfully request that you provide our staff with the following information:

- OK a) Reports, memoranda, statements, etc. concerning Miami Police Intelligence and WILLIE AUGUSTUS SOMERSETT
- OK b) Prison records, arrest records, reports, memoranda, statements, etc. concerning JOHN LARRY RAY a/k/a Johnny Larry Ray dob 2/14/1931
- OK c) Prison records, arrest records, reports, memoranda, statements, etc. concerning GERALD RAY a/k/a Jerry W. Ray dob 7/16/1935

AG # 25

- OK d) Reports, memoranda, etc. on JAMES EARL RAY concerning:
- (1) Automobile licensing,
 - (2) Automobile insurance,
 - (3) Driver's licensing,
 - (4) Birmingham bank safety deposit box,
 - (5) Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicles
 - (6) Investigation of Canadian movements and whereabouts,
 - (7) Investigation of Canadian passports.

see Mike Station

e) Report of the Department of Justice Task Force to review the FBI Martin Luther King, Jr., Security and Assassination Investigations - Appendix B - Interview Memoranda.

Copy of James Earl agreement

f) Most urgently, I request that any and all information in the possession of both aforementioned agencies with respect to the following names or any variations of these names be made available to the Committee as soon as possible:

[REDACTED]
LOUIS LOMAX

[REDACTED]
JAMES ROSE

b6

g) The Select Committee is aware that the Bureau's MURKIN files contain most of the investigative data related to the King assassination. Nevertheless, we solicit your cooperation in assuring that the agency's response to the aforementioned requests will include all information in any additional files, here in Washington or in the Bureau's field offices.

under every thing was mention

David Harrison Washington

h) I respectfully request that any and all indices in the possession of the Bureau or the Justice Department's Task Force related to the King assassination be made available to the Select Committee.

outside scope

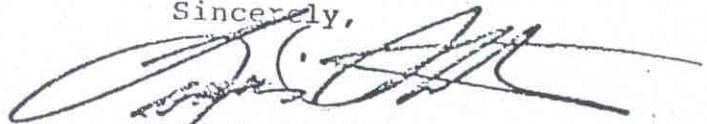
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Additionally, I request that Department of Justice Attorney Michael Shaheen meet with members of the staff of our Committee to discuss the Department of Justice Task Force to review the FBI Martin Luther King, Jr., Security and Assassination Investigations.

I thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,



LOUIS STOKES
Chairman

LS/alj

Levi. Planning
Approval
Agreement

WITH

ATTORNEY GENERAL GRIFFIN BELL

GENERAL MATTERS:

- ① 1. Access to unclassified FBI material. - see all 800 volumes unclassified and readily available
- ② 2. Establish procedures for and expedite security clearances. 15, then another 15
2 or 3 more

MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

- ③ Shaheen 1. Authorization for Michael Shaheen to meet with Committee Staff regarding Justice Department report on the assassination of Dr. King.
I don't know of any problem
 - ④ ? - Appendix B - Interview Memoranda of Task Force Report on assassination.
 - ⑤ State/Pittsburgh meeting 3. Copies of indices of FBI or Justice Department Task Force related to King assassination.
 - ⑥ Keller from Secured to Hunt 4. Specific requests for information.
From any source:
 - ⑦ Coopers & Lybrand Liaison Committee by Monday
 - ⑧ Trafficante
- a) Reports, memoranda, statements, etc. concerning Miami Police Intelligence and Willie Augustus Somerset;
 - b) Prison records, arrest records, reports, memoranda, statements, etc. concerning John Larry Ray a/k/a Johnny Larry Ray dob 2/14/1931
 - c) Prison records, arrest records, reports, memoranda, statements, etc. concerning Gerald Ray a/k/a Jerry W. Ray dob 7/16/1935
 - d) Reports, memoranda, etc. on James Earl Ray concerning:
 - (1) Automobile licensing,
 - (2) Automobile insurance,
 - (3) Driver's licensing,
 - (4) Birmingham bank safety deposit box,
 - (5) Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicles,
 - (6) Investigation of Canadian movements and whereabouts,
 - (7) Investigation of Canadian passports.

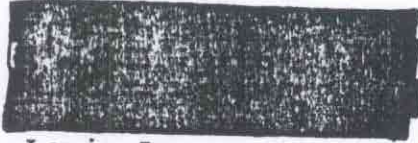
Secret Service

Mack
Carson

634-5771

AG #26

5. Any information in FBI or Task Force possession
pertaining to:



Louis Lomax



James Rose

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1

Suggested Supplemental Agenda

- I. FBI and Justice Departments continuing investigations of Kennedy and King assassinations and relationship with Select Committee
 - a. Problem of simultaneous investigation
 - b. Coordination and cooperation
 1. Notification to Select Committee of current FBI investigative steps
 2. Timing of notification
- IA. FBI Request for test bullets from Archives
- II. Liaison procedures with Justice Department
- III. Addition specific information of King case
 - a. Reports, memoranda, etc., on James Earl Ray's trip from California to New Orleans and Justice Department analysis of Louis Lomax articles on trip.
 - b. Reports, memoranda, etc., on Ray aliases: Paul Bridgman, George Ramon Sneyd, John Willard, James O'Connor, Eric S. Galt.
 - c. Alabama Department of Motor Vehicle records relative to Eric S. Galt.
 - d. FBI Forensic Reports
 - e. Information on Clifton E. Baird, Louisville, Kentucky
- ?
id he do. IV. The Matter of Stanley Pottinger meeting with Committee staff.
- V. All reports and memoranda relative to the FBI surveillance of Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

memorandum

APR 22 1977

DATE:
REPLY TO
ATTN OF:
SUBJECT:

~~Robert L. Keuch~~
Robert L. Keuch
Special Counsel to the Attorney General
Status Report

RLK:mal

RLK -

Approved - Good job

4/28/77

FBB

APR 25 1977

RECEIVED
OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL

TO: The Attorney General

This is to brief you on the steps I have taken in establishing and conducting liaison with the House Select Committee on Assassinations. In accordance with my conversation with Mike Kelly, it is my present intention to provide you with such reports approximately every two weeks.

I have met personally with the Chairman and the ranking minority member of the full Committee and with the Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Kennedy assassination matter and will meet in the very near future with the Chairman of the King Subcommittee. I informed each of the gentlemen that it is the Department's desire to be cooperative and as open and candid as we can possibly be and that in those areas where there are disagreements I will make every attempt to explain fully our position and to work the matter out consistent with their interests and the needs of the Department. These meetings, being the first, were cordial and of no great import.

I have agreed to expand the number of individuals to be given priority clearances to approximately 12-15 in order to take care of the major staff positions of the full Committee and the major staff positions for each Subcommittee. The Chairman of the Committee executed the Agreement of Understanding concerning the use to which information developed by the clearance procedures would be put and which you had previously executed and the Bureau has initiated a number of these clearances. I have been informally advised by the Security Director for the Committee staff that the Committee may wish to ultimately request clearances for as many as 80-90 members of the staff. It is my intent, should the number of requested clearances go significantly beyond 15-20 positions to raise the question of reimbursement by the Committee for the costs of the clearance procedures for people other than the most essential staff.

cc: Records
RLK



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AG # 27

In numerous conferences with Committee staff we have worked out generally procedures to be followed in processing the Committee's requests for information. I have required that all requests be signed by the Chairman and that the number of individuals in the staff who would contact either me or the designated Bureau representatives be limited to approximately four people. After consultation with the Committee staff and Bureau representatives, I have set up a procedure for providing the Committee with information relating to any ongoing investigations in their areas of interest and have agreed that in special circumstances I will, after consultation with the Bureau, direct special notification on a priority basis when appropriate.

In response to questions from the Chairman of the Committee relayed by Committee Counsel, I stated that the Department is not and will not conduct a full de novo investigation into either the King or Kennedy assassinations but that our investigative efforts will be limited solely to exploring any new allegations or leads which may develop. The Committee staff has stated that they will provide us promptly with any information involving criminal activities.

After numerous attempts to develop a full set of written procedures to cover all contingencies, I have concluded that the appropriate method to follow is to process each request on an ad hoc basis. Those materials that can be provided will, of course, be provided and those areas in which I determine that information cannot be provided to the Committee staff because it involves extremely sensitive national security information or information otherwise critical to our investigative efforts, I will notify the appropriate Chairman, either the Chairman of the full Committee or the Chairman of the appropriate Subcommittee and explain the Department's concerns. Should these gentlemen disagree with my judgment then the matter, of course, will have to be referred to you for decision. I believe such material will constitute a very minute amount of the materials requested and will make every effort to make your necessary participation in these decisions as limited as possible.

The Bureau and I are presently processing the lists of requests made by the Committee in the Chairman's letter to you of March 9. This will include among other things making Mr. Pottinger and Mr. Shaheen available for interviews with the staff and producing the interview reports related to the King Task Force report. At the present I see no problems in providing the items that they have requested to date.

As you are aware the Committee received information that a Louisville police officer claimed he was approached by FBI agents to kill Dr. King. The Committee has obtained a tape from the officer which is allegedly of this conversation. The Bureau was authorized to interview the police officer in the presence of the United States Attorney, however, the police officer, Mr. Baird, has refused to be interviewed by the Bureau. The Committee has agreed to provide the tape recording for duplication by the Bureau and have further agreed to maintain strict custody control of the tape so that the necessary chain of custody could be established should the tape possibly be ever used as evidence.

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AUG 3 1977

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

memorandum

DATE: *RLK*
REPLY TO: Robert L. Keuch
ATTN OF: Special Counsel to the Attorney General RLK:mal
SUBJECT: House Select Committee on Assassinations
TO: Director
Federal Bureau of Investigations

This is in partial response to your memorandum of April 28, 1977. In that memorandum you informed the Attorney General that the Bureau would refer all allegations relating to the investigations of the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and President John F. Kennedy, for Departmental consideration as to whether any investigation is required of the FBI. As you are aware those matters relating to the President Kennedy assassination are referred to the Criminal Division, while those matters related to Dr. King's assassination are referred to the Civil Rights Division and the Office of Professional Responsibility; all such reports, however, are directed to my attention in addition to this distribution.

This is to confirm that, absent a specific request from the Department, either by the Civil Rights Division, the Criminal Division, the Office of Professional Responsibility, or myself, no further investigation of the allegations which you are reporting related to these two assassination investigations is required or requested by the Department. I have discussed this procedure personally with representatives of the Civil Rights Division and the Office of Professional Responsibility and confirm that this procedure is understood by and satisfactory to that Division and Office, as well as to the Criminal Division.

cc: Mike Kelly ✓



AG # 30

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OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
(REV. 7-76)
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6
5010-112

memorandum

OCT 3 1977

DATE:
REPLY TO
ATTN OF:
SUBJECT:*RLK*Robert L. Keuch
Special Counsel to the Attorney General

RLK:mal

House Select Committee on Assassinations - Status Report

TO: The Attorney General

This is to provide you with an overall summary of the proceedings to date involving the Department of Justice compliance with requests made by the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

In general I feel we have been extremely cooperative with the Committee. I would like to note that the FBI has in my judgment been doing an outstanding job in processing the various requests made by the Committee. To date the Bureau has processed for Committee access, approximately 650 sections of their files concerning the Martin Luther King investigation and the John F. Kennedy assassination investigation. In addition to this they are in the process of reviewing approximately 150 sections of field office files which will be made available for Committee review in the very near future.

In addition to my general observation, however, I believe a few individual matters should be brought to your attention:

(1) With my authority the Bureau has made available for the Committee's use a mock-up which had been prepared of the assassination site in Memphis which relates, of course, to the King investigation. We have provided this to the Committee on a "loan" basis.

(2) After consultation with the Office of Legal Counsel it has been determined that the records which had been forwarded to the Criminal Division by the Rockefeller Commission under specific limitations imposed by President Ford, should be transmitted to the Archivist of the United States for permanent storage. This is being accomplished by letters of agreement which will reserve to the Department of Justice the right to access upon your authority or the authority of the Deputy Attorney General. The Committee had requested access to numerous Rockefeller documents and these requests will now be handled in normal course by the Archivist.

cc: Records
RLK

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AG # 31

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
(REV. 7-76)
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6
5010-112

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scope

In addition to what I consider these positive results, there is one matter in which your participation may be necessary and I have made this the subject of a separate memorandum previously forwarded. Briefly stated, this is the issue as to whether or not the Committee staff will be permitted access to a random selection of the raw documents in the Bureau's files as a means of checking on the validity of the excision process we are applying.