

The FBI, at headquarters and in the field, was determined to make political use of the violence that ruined the planned peaceful demonstration of March 28 in support of the striking sanitation workers. In response to a phone call from Assistant Director William C. Sullivan the next day <sup>(157-1092-183)</sup> Memphis sent headquarters a teletype that was unnecessary after the "information" had been supplied to Sullivan. What Sullivan was told could not be distributed to others. The teletype could be flashed around.

It is Orwellian in its untruthfulness and deliberate slantings that make it false. All the so-called information had been provided to headquarters in different form, without the angling to give false impressions.

King is portrayed as "obviously scared." It is alleged that "His only concern was to run to protect himself" Neither is true.

The account of how King got to the Rovermont Motel is distorted. While someone in the King party asked that they be escorted by Lt. M.E. Nichols of the Memphis Police Department to the well-known Peabody Hotel, that was because it was close by, only a few blocks away. It was Lieutenant Nichol's decision to take them to the Rovermont - and it was a wise decision.

~~Although this is the teletype~~ With less explicitness than the original record the teletype admits this. First it states that Nichols refused to try to get them to the Peabody because "due to the rioting they could not" get there. This is followed by "The Negro driver asked ~~himself~~ just to get them away from trouble. Lt. Nichols then escorted them to Rovermont Motel."

However, this is then distorted in the teletype Sullivan clearly solicited:

Interesting observation made by Memphis Office in that Dr. King in his role as leader ~~of the movement~~ at moment of disturbance and trouble was primarily interested in preservation of himself ~~and~~... Somewhat inconsistent with statements attributed to him during talk that the black man should support his own establishments. Dr. King first sought residence at Sheraton Peabody and ended up staying at Rovermont Motel."

The moment of honesty that follows was soon forgotten in the FBI's campaign to ruin King and exacerbate the Memphis situation: "In past he has stayed at the Lorraine Motel, which is a quality Negro motel, "emphis."

In fact King always stayed at the Lorraine when he was in Memphis. Other FBI records disclose he had been at the Lorraine on eight earlier occasions.

The FBI's records disclose no time at which King had stayed at any white motel. In this case the decision was not his and was that of the local police.

Although Memphis covered itself by including reference to King's having stayed at the Lorraine neither that office nor headquarters paid any attention to that in the approved effort to defame King over staying at the Rivermont.

Atlanta helped ~~it~~ the FBI's inflammatory efforts along with its April 1 response to a Memphis phone call of that day. (157-1092-225)

"In connection with the racial incidents" in Memphis, FBI-talk for strike, it provided what Memphis asked for, "photographs of the following individuals who are on the Agitator Index of the Security Index of the Atlanta Division and who could possibly come to Memphis in connection with the racial incidents there." Eleven men, including King, are then listed. (Memphis promptly indexed all the names to another "Extremist Matters" file of "Security-Related Classification," 157-962.)

Also on April 1 New York pitched in with its "Urgent" teletype. (157-1092-197) This is apparently the result of disguised electronic surveillance, a phone tap of a bug.

"(Obliterated)) a source whose information is to be classified secret "Secret" advised that Stanley Levison stated that as a result of meeting in Atlanta, Ga., on March 31, 1968, Martin Luther King will return to Memphis on Tuesday, April 2, 1968 (and that there will be a big march on Friday) April 5, 1968) (sic)

The assassination did not end the FBI's intrusions and surveillances. New York, apparently the result of further electronic surveillances, teletyped the plans of King's firmers and associates, Levison and Harry Belafonte, for attending the funeral and the ~~march~~ Memphis march of April 8, and for going ahead with the Poor Peoples' Campaign. The teletype holds direct quotations such as would be obtained from electronic interception. It also begins with the form for disguised reporting of them, "(obliterated) whose information is to be classified 'Secret' )//y

FBI WASH DC

FBI MEMPHIS

413PM URGENT 3/29/68 CAF

TO DIRECTOR ATTN: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR W. C. SULLIVAN  
FROM MEMPHIS (157-1092) 3P

SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, RM.

RE MEMPHIS TEL CALL TO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR W. C. SULLIVAN.

AT TIME INCIDENTS BEGAN IN MARCH HELD IN MEMPHIS, MARCH TWENTYEIGHT, SIXTYEIGHT, MARTIN LUTHER KING, AT HEAD OF MARCH, WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID, "I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE." THIS STATEMENT FURNISHED BY LT. ARKIN OF MEMPHIS PD, WHO ALSO ADVISED KING WAS OBVIOUSLY SCARED.

FURTHER DETAILS AS TO INCIDENTS AT START OF MARCH SECURED FROM LT. M. E. NICHOLS OF MEMPHIS PD WHO WAS IN VICINITY AND OBSERVED ACTIVITIES. HE REPORTED DR. KING MADE NO EFFORT TO QUIET MOB AND HIS ONLY CONCERN WAS TO RUN AND PROTECT HIMSELF. LT. NICHOLS HAS ADVISED THAT DR. KING, RALPH ABERNATHY, BERNARD LEE AND TWO OTHER NEGRO MALES UNKNOWN TO HIM WERE AT HEAD OF MARCH WHEN TROUBLE BEGAN, THIS GROUP TRIED TO COMMANDEER A WHITE PANEL TRUCK TO GET THEM AWAY FROM MARCH. DRIVER OF TRUCK REFUSED TO HELP. A WHITE PONTIAC WHICH WAS OCCUPIED BY TWO NEGRO FEMALES FOLLOWED THE PANEL TRUCK IN THE CROSS TRAFFIC. ONE OF KING'S

END PAGE ONE

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PAGE TWO

AIDES MANAGED TO STOP PONTIAC. AIDE ASKED IF THE WOMEN WOULD ASSIST IN GETTING DR. KING OUT OF DANGER. THE WOMEN AGREED. THEREAFTER, ONE OF KING'S AIDES SLID BEHIND STEERING WHEEL. THE OTHER FOUR NEGRO MALES, INCLUDING DR. KING, GOT IN REAR SEAT OF PONTIAC. CAR WAS DRIVEN TO BEALE AND FRONT STREET, AT WHICH POINT IT WAS SURROUNDED BY ABOUT FIFTY INDIVIDUALS CONSISTING OF NEGROES AND NEWS REPRESENTATIVES. LT. NICHOLS, WHO WAS ON MOTORCYCLE, CLEARED CROWD FROM AROUND PONTIAC AND ASKED DRIVER OF PONTIAC WHERE HE WAS GOING. DRIVER SAID HE HAD DR. KING IN BACK SEAT AND HE HAD TO GET AWAY. THE OFFICER WAS ASKED TO ESCORT THEM TO HOTEL SHERATON PEABODY. LT. NICHOLS EXPLAINED THAT DUE TO RIOTING THEY COULD NOT GET TO SHERATON PEABODY AND ASKED IF THEY WANTED TO GO TO ANOTHER PLACE. THE NEGRO DRIVER ASKED JUST TO GET THEM AWAY FROM TROUBLE.

LT. NICHOLS THEN ESCORTED THEM TO RIVERMONT MOTEL. LT. NICHOLS WENT TO DESK CLERK AND ASKED IF SHE HAD SPACE FOR FIVE NEGROES INCLUDING DR. KING. THE DESK CLERK TOLD LT. NICHOLS THE NEGROES COULD REMAIN IN THE LOBBY AND EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO OBTAIN ROOM FOR THEM. AFTER THE FIVE NEGROES, INCLUDING DR.

PAGE THREE .

KING LEFT THE PONTIAC, THE TWO NEGRO FEMALES DROVE ON. LT. NICHOLS DID NOT OBTAIN NAMES OF THESE TWO FEMALES AND FEELS CERTAIN THEY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH DR. KING AND WERE NOT A PART OF DR. KING'S PARTY. LT. NICHOLS STAYED AT THE RIVERMONT HOTEL AND KNOWS THE TWO FEMALE OCCUPANTS OF THIS CAR DID NOT RETURN TO THE RIVERMONT WHILE HE WAS THERE.

INTERESTING OBSERVATION MADE BY MEMPHIS OFFICE IN THAT DR. KING IN HIS ROLE AS LEADER AT MOMENT OF DISTURBANCE AND TROUBLE WAS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN PRESERVATION OF HIMSELF AND MADE NO EFFORT TO QUIET GROUP THAT WAS FOLLOWING HIS LEADERSHIP. SOMEWHAT INCONSISTENT WITH STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM DURING TALK THAT THE BLACK MAN SHOULD SUPPORT HIS OWN BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS, DR. KING FIRST SOUGHT RESIDENCE AT SHERATON PEABODY AND ENDED UP STAYING AT RIVERMONT HOTEL, WHICH IS PART OF HOLIDAY INN CHAIN. IN PAST HE HAS STAYED AT THE LORRAINE MOTEL, WHICH IS A QUALITY NEGRO MOTEL, MEMPHIS.

DR. KING, ACCOMPANIED BY RALPH D. ABERNATHY AND BERNARD LEE, DEPARTED MEMPHIS BY EASTERN AIRLINES APPROXIMATELY THREE TWENTY PM THIS DATE. DESTINATION ATLANTA. ATLANTA ADVISED TELEPHONICALLY.

END

LCC

FBI WASH DC

X

4/1/68

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

TO: SAC, MEMPHIS

FROM: SAC, ATLANTA (100-5586) (P)

SUBJECT: SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE  
RM

Re Memphis telcall to Atlanta 4/1/68.

Enclosed for Memphis are photographs of the following individuals who are on the Agitator Index or the Security Index of the Atlanta Division and who could possibly come to Memphis in connection with the racial incidents there.

STOKELY CARMICHAEL  
 CALVIN F. CRAIG  
 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
 HULON MITCHELL  
 WILLIE RICKS  
 DONALD PAYNE STONE  
 HOSEA LORENZA WILLIAMS  
 STANLEY WISE  
 RALPH EDWARD FEATHERSTONE  
 ETHEL HARRIET MINOR  
 GEORGE WASHINGTON WARE

*Names listed to 157-962*

② - Memphis (Encs. <sup>Wgn</sup> 11) (RM)  
 2 - Atlanta  
 CSH:jlh  
 (4)

157-1092-225

157-962  
 ① 157-1092

*Wgn*

SERIAL *one*

APR 3 1968

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Section 4

# DECODED COPY

Radio

APRIL 1, 1968

Teletype

TO: DIRECTOR AND MEMPHIS  
FROM: NEW YORK

- URGENT -

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., SM - C. OO:ATLANTA.

**[REDACTED]** A SOURCE WHOSE INFORMATION IS TO BE CLASSIFIED "SECRET") ADVISED THAT STANLEY LEVISON STATED THAT AS A RESULT OF MEETING IN ATLANTA, GA. ON MARCH 30, 1968, MARTIN LUTHER KING WILL RETURN TO MEMPHIS ON TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1968 (AND THAT THERE WILL BE A BIG MARCH ON FRIDAY) APRIL 5, 1968).

COPY SENT TO ATLANTA REGULAR MAIL.

RECEIVED VIA TELETYPE

*Other*  
*100-4505*  
*File 7*  
*Holloman advised re travel plans of MLK.*  
*RL*  
*Lowe HHC*  
*Lawrence WHP*  
*(info)*

157-1092-197

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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*RL*

If the intelligence contained in the above message is to be disseminated outside the Bureau, it is suggested that it be suitably paraphrased in order to protect the Bureau's cryptographic systems.

XX

FBI NEW YORK

124 PM URGENT 4-5-68 JLW

TO MEMPHIS AND WASHINGTON FIELD  
FROM NEW YORK 05 1710 GR 255

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., SM -- C; OFFICE OF ORIGIN ATLANTA.

[REDACTED] WHOSE INFORMATION IS TO BE CLASSIFIED "SECRET", ADVISED APRIL FOUR, NINETEEN SIXTY-EIGHT, THAT STANLEY LEVISON AND HARRY WACHTEL DISCUSSED WHAT ACTION THEY SHOULD TAKE AS A RESULT OF ASSASSINATION OF KING. THEY ORIGINALLY PLANNED TO FLY TO MEMPHIS NIGHT OF APRIL FOUR BUT LATER AGREED NO IMPORTANT DISCUSSIONS OR DECISIONS COULD TAKE PLACE THAT NIGHT. WHILE MAKING PLANS TO GO TO MEMPHIS, LEVISON SAID HE FELT HE AND WACHTEL SHOULD GO "THERE" BECAUSE HE FELT A WHOLE SERIES OF PERPLEXING QUESTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE HANDLED BY THE (SCLC) STAFF AND THAT HE AND WACHTEL COULD CONTRIBUTE. LEVISON SAID HE MEANT SHOULD THEY GO ON WITH "THIS MARCH" (THE MEMPHIS MARCH SCHEDULED FOR APRIL EIGHT) AND SHOULD THEY GO ON WITH "THE WASHINGTON THING" (KING'S POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN). LEVISON AND HARRY BELAFONTE LATER AGREED TO FLY TO ATLANTA ON MORNING OF APRIL FIVE, NINETEEN SIXTYEIGHT.

END  
MEN  
(2) 1-12 PM

*6/24 copy in 100-4105*

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*or*

157-1092-260

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