

FBI

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Date: 3/21/69

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Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) (P)
SUBJECT: MURKIN

Enclosed for the Bureau are 4 copies and for Philadelphia 2 copies of an LHM pertaining to statements made by Rev. JAMES BEVEL, as reported in the March 18, 1969, edition of the "New York Times."

No further investigation is being conducted in this regard.

cc: Civil Rights Division
Form 6-34

MAR 20 1969 1 cc CIVIL RIGHTS UNIT

- (3) - Bureau (Encs. 4)
- 2 - Philadelphia (Encs. 2)
- 1 - Memphis

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MAR 24 1969

REC-157 44-38861-5660

60 Approved: [Signature]
Special Agent in Charge

Per [Signature]



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Memphis, Tennessee
March 21, 1969

RE: JAMES EARL RAY;
Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - VICTIM
CR - CONSPIRACY

An article appearing in the March 18, 1969, edition of the "New York Times," a daily newspaper published at New York, New York, contained an article datelined March 17, 1969, at Philadelphia, which states that Reverend James Bevel, identified in the article as Director of Non-Violent Education and Direct Action for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, has indicated that "there definitely was a conspiracy" to kill Dr. King. This article quotes Rev. Bevel as saying that as a result of a mistake made by Memphis Postal Authorities, a letter addressed to a white woman was delivered to a Negro woman of the same name who lived in another part of Memphis. This letter, he stated, contained the "relevant and pertinent information that Dr. King was to be assassinated while in Memphis." Rev. Bevel further states that this letter was immediately turned over to the Memphis Police but that no special security measures were placed around the Lorraine Motel, at which place Dr. King was killed.

On March 21, 1969, Inspector N. E. Zachary, Memphis Police Department, Memphis, Tennessee, who was in charge of the Homicide Bureau at the time Dr. King was killed, advised that he has never heard of such a letter and that at no time during his investigation of the King murder was it ever called to his attention that such a letter had ever existed.

On March 21, 1969, Inspector Don Smith, Memphis Police Department, Memphis, Tennessee, who was in charge of security arrangements for Dr. King's visit to Memphis on April 3, 1968, advised that when he met Dr. King and

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his associates at the Memphis Airport on April 3, 1968, he inquired of Dr. King as to his plans for his stay in Memphis in order that necessary security measures might be put into effect. Inspector Smith said he was told by Rev. James Lawson, Pastor of the Centenary Methodist Church, Memphis, and who was one of Dr. King's associates, that Dr. King's plans had not been fully made and that he was unable to furnish Inspector Smith any information. Inspector Smith said that when Dr. King left the Memphis Airport, he (Inspector Smith) had no idea of the destination and that he "tagged along" to find out where they were going. He said that as soon as Dr. King arrived at the Lorraine Motel, he called for additional officers and had them posted in the vicinity of the Lorraine Motel.

Inspector Smith stated that he has never heard of a letter such as the one described by Rev. Bevel, and he doubts that such a letter ever existed.

On March 21, 1969, [REDACTED] Postal Inspector's Office, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that he has no information in his possession to indicate that such a letter as the one described by Rev. Bevel ever existed.

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