

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, LOS ANGELES (44-1574)

FROM : SA RICHARD M. WOOLF

SUBJECT: MURKIN

DATE: 5/23/77

On 5/16/77, LES SUZUKAMO, reporter, UCLA "Daily Bruin" telephone 825-2638, telephonically advised that MARK LANE had made an appearance at UCLA on 5/16/77, and had talked about his new book concerning the assassination of MARTIN LUTHER KING. Among other things, according to SUZAKAMO, LANE alleges that the FBI was responsible for the death of KING, that the FBI had no basis for investigating KING, that the FBI conducted an illegal wiretap of KING, etc.

In response to inquiry, SUZAKAMO was furnished information as set forth in Bureau letter dated 4/21/76, entitled, "MEDIA RELATIONS, RESPONSE TO CRITICISM OF FBI CONCERNING ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR."

For information.

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44-1574-1962

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MAY 27 1977	
FBI - LOS ANGELES	

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Man Loses Reward In King Murder

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The man who led police to the rifle which investigators believe killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was denied a \$100,000 reward Monday offered for help in convicting the killer.

Charles Quitman Stephens, who lived in the rooming house where the shot that killed King was fired on April 4, 1968, told police then that he saw a man running from a bathroom carrying a long package. A rifle with the fingerprints of James Earl Ray was found inside later.

Ray now is serving a 99-year sentence at Brushy Mountain State Prison after pleading guilty to murder in King's death.

Stephens was held in the Shelby County jail at Memphis after the slaying as a material witness in the case.

Judge Charles A. Rond denied the rewards because Stephens gave police most of his information before the rewards were posted and it did not lead "to the identification and arrest of James Earl Ray as murderer."

The state Court of Appeals upheld Judge Rond's ruling. Judge Charles E. Nearne dissented from that portion which held, in effect, that Stephens' giving information to the police before the rewards were posted disqualified him.

If that were the case, Nearne said, it would encourage citizens to wait "until the pot is right" before giving information to police.

Nearne agreed Stephens' information was not essential to the case against Ray, which Ray still is fighting despite his guilty plea.

The Memphis Publishing Co. had offered \$50,000 of the reward. Other donors included: The Memphis Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association and Future Memphis Inc., \$25,000; Mrs. Wells Awsumb, \$1,000; National Alliance of Postal Employees, \$10,000; City of Memphis, \$5,000; city councilmen, \$8,915, plus \$85 in cash donations.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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1963

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Attorney Says Ray Sought Trial in Escape Bid

By JOY HOROWITZ
Herald Examiner Staff Writer

James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Martin Luther King Jr., escaped from the Brushy Mountain Penitentiary a week and a half ago not to flee prison, but to "escape into a courtroom," one of his lawyers has said.

In an exclusive interview with The Herald-Examiner, attorney Mark Lane, of Washington, D.C., said that Ray, who has attempted to be tried for the murder of King, fled from prison so that his case could finally come to trial.

"What he had planned was if he got off the (prison) and escaped from the mountainous regions of Tennessee and got to a population center, he was going to call his attorney and have him negotiate with the government — state and federal," Lane said.

"The terms he had in mind when he escaped were that he would surrender if he was guaranteed a trial," Lane said.

Ray never has been tried for King's murder since he entered a guilty plea on March 10, 1969. The U.S. Supreme Court recently refused to allow him to withdraw his guilty plea.

"In essence," said Lane, who became Ray's attorney days ago along with Tennessee attorney Jack Kershaw, "Ray was not trying so much to escape from the Brushy Mountain Penitentiary as to escape into a courtroom."

Ray, who is serving a 99-year prison sentence, has maintained that his original guilty plea was coerced by his lawyer at the time, Percy Foreman.

Ray claims a mysterious man named "Raoul" furnished the money for a rifle Ray bought which was allegedly used to kill King in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

But he has said he did not know "Raoul" planned on killing King.

Ray is expected to be indicted for escaping prison, allegedly, by a Tennessee grand jury next week.

Lane said his legal strategy will be to try the case of the murder of Martin Luther King in Ray's escape trial.

"It is our contention that Ray is wrongfully at the penitentiary in the first place because he was coerced...into pleading guilty, and therefore, he cannot lawfully escape," Lane declared.

"The trial of the death of Martin Luther King has not yet taken place. We hope to turn the trial of James Earl Ray for escaping into the first legal confrontation of the case about who killed Dr. King."

Lane, who said he last spoke with Ray April 23, said he will attempt to call key witnesses involved with the assassination, including "all the people in the FBI who terminated the destroy-King squad" and former Memphis Police Chief Frank Holtzman, a J. Edgar Hoover associate and the man who was responsible for reducing security surrounding King the day he was killed.

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(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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Lane further charged that the FBI had no lawful jurisdiction in trying to apprehend Ray since he was charged with a state crime, not a federal one.

"Kershaw (Ray's other attorney) has informed me that one prisoner picked up (before Ray was captured) was actually beaten by an FBI agent for the purpose of forcing him to tell where Ray was because the FBI was anxious to capture Ray before the local authorities did," Lane claimed.

"The rest of that is going to be told in affidavits in court."