

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987)

DATE: 4/16/68

FROM : SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE

SUBJECT: MURKIN  
CR

RE: INQUIRY RE PEOPLE AT LORRAINE MOTEL

(Rev. SAMUEL B. KYLES, Aka  
S. B. Kyles)

On morning of 4/15/68, SA STEPHEN M. DARLINGTON advised SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE that he had obtained a list from WALTER LEE BAILEY, operator of the Lorraine Motel and Hotel, 406 Mulberry, as to those individuals registered into this hotel-motel on 4/3-4/68, the day preceding and the day on which Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. was murdered. Among those listed was S. B. KYLES who was staying in Room 312, April 3-4, 1968, and BAILEY stated that he is pastor of the Monumental Baptist Church, 704 South Parkway East and resides at 2215 South Parkway East.

SA DARLINGTON stated that for the past several days he has been unable to make contact with KYLES, that he has called his home and his church on frequent occasions, left word for KYLES to return his call and on one occasion KYLES did return the call but SA DARLINGTON was not in the office.

SA DARLINGTON requested that the writer attempt to interview KYLES.

At approximately 12:30 p.m. 4/15/68, SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE attempted to call the church, 704 South Parkway East, and no one answered, called his residence phone 323-0565 and his wife answered the phone. She stated in a rather terse manner after the Agent introduced himself that her husband Rev. SAMUEL B. KYLES, pastor of the Monumental Baptist Church was out of the city and would not return to Memphis until Saturday morning, 4/20/68. She refused to say where he can be located in the interim.

It was emphasized to her by SA LAWRENCE that it



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was of paramount importance that her husband be interviewed as early as possible due to the fact that he was possibly at the Lorraine Motel about the time that Dr. KING was murdered and that he might possibly be of material benefit to this Bureau in identifying the assailant. She stated that she realized this but that she still refused to advise writer as to her husband's whereabouts. She emphasized that she would have Rev. KYLES call SA LAWRENCE on Saturday, 4/20/68 upon his return.

It will be noted that independently on Sunday, 4/7/68, Dr. VASCO A. SMITH, JR. [REDACTED] advised writer that he and his wife MAXINE SMITH and Rev. KYLES were to have dinner with MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, 4/4/68, the evening which he was murdered at approximately 6:01 p.m. and that the dinner was to have been in the home of KYLES and that he understood that KYLES had been at the motel at the time KING was murdered.

It is of further interest to note that SA DARLINGTON advised that officers of the Homicide Bureau, Memphis, Tennessee PD have advised him that they have made concerted efforts to interview KYLES and that he has steadfastly refused to talk with them.

As further interest it will be noted that the 4/12/68 issue of the Press Scimitar newspaper had story on page one captioned "Negroes Plan New Protest" written by staff writer CLARK PORTEOUS stated that Rev. JAMES M. LAWSON and Rev. SAMUEL B. KYLES both leaders in the Community on the Move for Equality (COME), supporters in the current sanitation strike at a press conference held earlier 4/12/68 made charges of Memphis police brutality including charges of police thefts of money from Negroes stopped for questioning during the recent curfew and reported that KYLES said that many Negroes who were beaten by the police and who needed hospitalization could not get ambulance service from the city and further stated that Negro filling station operators almost in a group were harassed, threatened and in some instances their windows were broken and their help beaten if they remained open only two minutes after the curfew. He claimed that the Memphis Gas, Light and Water Division would not send service trucks into Negro areas, that telephone lines were jammed and that all sorts of things happened and that the

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press refused to print any of this. PORTEOUS reported that LAWSON and KYLES declined to give details on the charges that the police took money and that KYLES said that efforts to get a civilian review board to investigate charges of police brutality have been going on for five years without success.

LEADS:

MEMPHIS DIVISION

AT MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Will attempt to recontact Rev. KYLES on 4/20/68 in and effort to interview him concerning any information which he might possess which would be of benefit in solving captioned case.

ARMED AND DANGEROUS.