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Dear Harold and Lil:

Thank you for all the hospitality. It looks like we are coming in July for sure, Betsy has signed up for her seminar. Dates in next letter.

As I write this, I have a call in to Donald Wilson, the FBI agent who has claimed to have material from James Earl Ray's car. He is supposed to call me back. Should I hold my breath?

I wrote Mary Ann Sadue yesterday. I tried to encourage her.

Upon review on my return, I have one or two original items that I mistakenly took from you. Enclosed. Sorry.

I think I have a complete set of the transcripts from the Ray hearing. I have two Vol. VI's.

Harold, do you have written down anywhere the addresses that Ray gave you of Rauol? Where he met him in Louisiana.

Things are going well here. Busy but not yet rich!

We have blue skies and hot today. I have to admit, I really liked the nice weather that we had in Frederick. Those East Coast blue skies are always pretty.

I was glad to hear that Gerry G. got back home without any tire trouble. I had a two year old battery go bad in my car as soon as I got back. Just like I was warning you! These batteries they sell now, are not as long lasting as the old car batteries. The old ones, got hot and sprayed sulfuric acid over the engine, but they lasted longer.

I know it sounds corny, but I think of you every night, late. Waketh the Watchman? It seems to me, the Watchman of this democracy is an old fellow in Frederick, who arises every night about 1:30 am and writes about democracy. It helps me sleep sounder knowing that you are keeping an eye on this country, while the rest of us sleep. I think I kind of took our freedom for granted, but reading your work, it is truly scary how close we have been to not having a democracy.

Welll, Mr. Wilson called me back. See attached letter.

Harold, it is late and I must run. Documents next time. My copier has been uncooperative. Wilson was fascinating. Said phone might be tapped at his business. Was interested to see FBI attack him without looking at material. Used Pepper to meet Dexter and Coretta King. Seems sincere. Cynical. Told me he was looking for your King book but could not find it. So, I sent him one. Works 5 miles from Betsy's dad's house. I sent him a package of material and articles. As your publicity agent, I figure you owe me \$500! Will expect check in next mail.

Bill

Agent

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Conservatively dressed, his reddish hair tinged gray, Wilson said his purported evidence does not support the theory, espoused by the King family, that Ray was innocent. But he added: "It gives a degree of credibility to his story about the existence of this mystery character Raul."

Yet when Wilson announced last month that he had evidence relating to one of the most notorious political assassinations of the 20th Century, an FBI spokesman quickly derided his story as "a total fabrication." And in Memphis, Assistant District Atty. Lee Coffee said Wilson's documents appear a concoction of Ray's attorney, William F. Pepper.

In a pique after such attacks, Wilson retracted an offer to hand the documents over to U.S. Atty. Gen. Janet Reno. Still, when Mrs. King met with Reno earlier this month to plead for a new investigation of the murder, she urged an examination of Wilson's claims.

Wilson's tale begins on April 11, 1968, a week after King's death. Then 25, fresh out of FBI training and stationed in Atlanta, Wilson said he tagged along with another

FBI agent to Atlanta's Capital Homes Housing Project, where Ray's Mustang had been found.

While the other FBI agent talked with a police officer, Wilson said he noticed the Mustang's passenger door ajar. He pulled out a handkerchief, he said, opened the door and saw a small white envelope fall out.

Wilson said he reacted with "instant panic." A misstep in a major case, Wilson said he thought, could have brought the wrath of the FBI's powerful director, J. Edgar Hoover.

"Taking that split-second action had nothing to do with grand or noble reasons," he said. "This gets to the basic philosophy of the FBI: Everything was predicated on fear. Fear of Mr. Hoover."

Wilson said he stepped on the envelope, reached down and slipped it into his pocket.

In a conference room at the bank where Wilson stores the documents and serves as an advisory board member, Wilson gingerly laid out the slips of paper allegedly from Ray's car.

One is a partial page from a 1963 Dallas telephone book. In the top margin, someone wrote, "Raul 214." To the left is an old-style telephone number: LA 8-4775, preceded by the letter J. The number once belonged to the Vegas Club,

owned by Ruby, but the club had been closed for two years when King was killed.

The torn page lists Hunts in Dallas, including Hunt Oil Corp, a name with its place in Kennedy legend. Oil magnate H.L. Hunt, who died in 1974, promoted a flight-wing radio program in Kennedy's day, and a son, Nelson Bunker Hunt, helped fund an anti-Kennedy newspaper ad that ran the day Kennedy was killed. In 1977, the House investigated a letter purportedly written by Oswald to a "Mr. Hunt."

The second is a faint, handwritten list of five words or names followed by figures ranging from 15,000 to 175,000. There is a second, cryptic mention of Raul. One word on the slip is "Canada," where Ray stopped before his arrest in London two months after the shooting.

The envelope also contained cards for a Texas gun shop and a Louisiana towing company, Wilson said.

The connections strike some as all too neat. Doubtters include Gerald Posner, author of "Killing the Dream," a new book that debunks conspiracy theories surrounding King's death.

Ray's lawyer, Posner said, "has been trying hard to tie the King case to the Kennedy case."

Ray death could give new life to papers

Former FBI agent says they might have clues to King slaying

By Douglas Holt
Chicago Tribune Staff Writer
Circa 5-1-98

Sheathed in plastic, the yellowed, ink-stained slips of paper sit in a north suburban bank vault.

Their owner, former FBI agent Donald G. Wilson, 55, stepped forward last month saying the papers came from the car of James Earl Ray, the confessed killer of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Ray died of liver failure Thursday.

Wilson, who now runs Andon Music Performance Corp. in Buffalo Grove, said he found the papers in Atlanta in Ray's abandoned car days after King's 1968 assassination in Memphis. He said he concealed them out of fear he would be punished for disturbing a crime scene. After Ray confessed, Wilson said, he figured the case was closed.

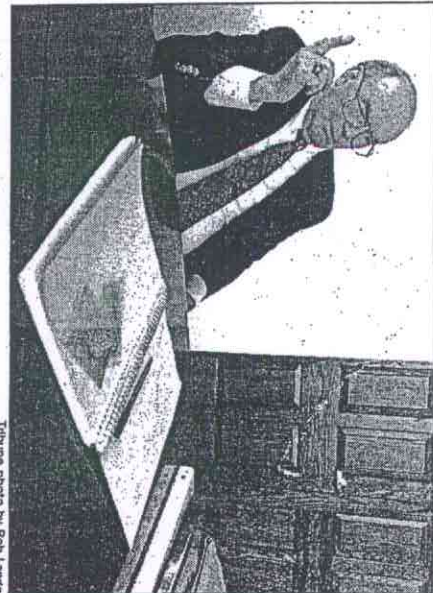
But when he saw Coretta Scott King on TV last year pleading for information to spur a trial for Ray, Wilson said, he called the Kings to reveal what he says he found.

"The King family wants to know the truth," Wilson said. "I thought I might be able to help."

The papers bear the handwritten name "Raul," the name of a supposed gunrunner Ray blamed for a plot to kill King. And they include a telephone number that once rang a Dallas nightclub owned by Jack Ruby, the man who killed Lee Harvey Oswald, President John F. Kennedy's assassin.

If authentic, they suggest a link between the assassinations of King and Kennedy. If not, as the FBI insists, they illustrate how far conspiracy theorists will go to perpetuate a hoax.

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Wilson photo by Bob Langley

Former FBI Agent Donald Wilson displays two papers he says he took from James Earl Ray's abandoned car in Atlanta in 1968.

Still, Posner rejects the FBI's quick dismissal of the documents without their examination.

To others, Wilson's story strikes suspicious that, as the House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded in 1979, King's death "probably" evolved from a conspiracy.

Rev. Jesse Jackson said he believes Ray was guilty. He also

thinks the murder had some tie to the government, which through the FBI sought to discredit King.

"It took 27 years to get [South African President Nelson] Mandela out of jail," Jackson said. "It's now 30 years later, and the unanswered questions about Dr. King's assassination will not go away."