

Memorandum of Interview of Robert Jensen, Security
Officer, Holiday Inns, Memphis, Tennessee, formerly
Special Agent in Charge, Memphis Field Office, F.B.I.
July 7, 1976

Messrs. Walker and Folsom interviewed former Special Agent in Charge Jensen at the Executive Offices of the Holiday Inns Corporation. The interviewers explained their mission and inquired about Jensen's tour of duty as SAC. He said he had been SAC in Birmingham and came to Memphis in 1965 as SAC after a stint on the Inspection Staff.

Jensen assured us that there had been no counterintelligence type activity against King either in Birmingham or in Memphis during his tenure at either station. He was sure he would have had to know had there been such. He gave the same answer with respect to technical installations in either location. In Birmingham there was a sound man who was an old timer with obsolete equipment.

We asked about the F.B.I.'s role in relation to the Sanitation Worker's strike in early 1968. Jensen said there was agent participation in observing the strike activities for intelligence purposes. The Memphis Police Department and confidential informants also supplied information to the Field Office. Jensen said the situation in Memphis was not the same as it had been in Birmingham implying that Memphis did not have as great a potential for racial violence because the strike was an isolated issue.

The "Invaders" were not of any importance until they got involved in the Poor People's March. They had no stature in the Black community. They did meet with Dr. King at the Rivermont Hotel after the disrupted March 28 march led by King. Jensen recalled that King was taken to the Rivermont pretty much by the police escort because that's where they

assumed King was staying. When he returned on April 3, he was booked into the Lorraine by his own managers.

Jensen says King's being at the Lorraine was known as that is where he was served by the U.S. Marshals with a temporary restraining order. This was in the April 4 morning edition of the Commercial Appeal.

Jensen learned of the murder from the Memphis police after it occurred. He dispatched Special Agent Hester to the hospital and within about an hour was informed that King was clinically dead. He was instructed by the Bureau to go ahead with an investigation. By midnight all of the evidence at the crime scene had been collected and dispatched in the care of an agent by plane to Washington.

The Memphis police, meanwhile, had been unable to do much of anything because they were caught up with the problem of coping with the riots and burnings that followed a brief hiatus of shock after news of the assassination was broadcast.

The SAC and his successor in the same office in Birmingham were in consultation by phone on the morning of April 5th about finding the seller of the rifle (identified by Remington during the night). Both agents wondered whether the assassin might be an agent of the Communists. Informers in the Communist Party and in every organization with a radical bias (right or left) were ordered contacted with negative results as to any plot against King.

To manage the investigation Jensen set up a separate force in the Field Office when DeLoach from the Bureau, and four inspectors visited Memphis on the 5th. He asked for more manpower and 16 or so agents were detailed. He was instructed by DeLoach: "You better find that son of a bitch in a hurry," and that was all. He did not recall that agents were

sent who had not formerly been police officers. He surmized that this had been done in Mississippi to avoid possible sympathy problems when police might be implicated, and hence was an early precaution the Bureau took in the King assassination case.

Jensen said there was effort to run out all suspect leads. This narrowed when the trail led to Ray.

We asked about the possibility that someone financed Ray. Jensen referred to the .38 pistol taken from Ray on his capture in London. This gun was traced from its origin in Japan to a dealer in California to a buyer in Georgia to a person in Birmingham and there sold to an individual in October of 1967 through a newspaper advertisement. Jensen surmized that this gun was used in robberies to finance Ray. An inquiry - among many - in Los Angeles brought out that about 15 unsolved robberies occurred there at pertinent times and the robber fit the general description of Ray.

Jensen replied to an inquiry about why it took about 12 days before anyone thought to match up the unknown subject's prints with the fugitive print files, that this was a responsibility of the lab and lab procedures cause some delay in such cases.

Jensen said he had no conversations with defense lawyers Hanes or Percy Foreman. After the plea and sentence Jensen and two agents (Hester was one) interviewed Ray in prison and attempted to cajole him into answering questions. The only significant things Ray said were that they never would have caught him except for the photographs of him. And, while he said "you don't have a good case" he admitted that Stephens at the flophouse "did get a good look at me." On terminating the prison interview Ray told the agents to take a good look at him as they were "going to have to find me." he made no response to suggestions he had lied about "Raoul." There was no response to Jensen's suggestion that

Ray's brothers had helped him get to Canada.

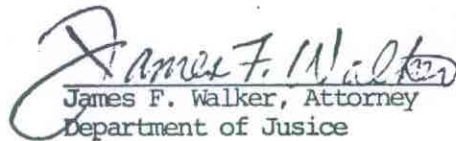
Jensen's final comments were about Dan Rather of CBS who asked what instructions Hoover issued to Jensen in view of the Hoover-King animosity. Jensen said, "none." He pointed out he got a bonus for his work on the Ray case.

Jensen feels confident that Ray acted alone. His life style and the unlikelihood that anyone would hire a loser like Ray convinces him. Jensen pointed out that the multiplicity of police agencies involved in the events of April 4 (MPD, the Sheriff's office and the State Troopers) makes it virtually impossible that the police were in any conspiracy to set Ray up as the assassin; someone in these three groups would have raised a question and disclosed the scheme.

Memorandum of Interview of R.T. Johnson, Deputy chief,
Memphis Fire Department- Phone No. 901/458-8281

On December 21, 1976, I telephoned R.T. Johnson, Deputy Chief, Memphis Fire Department (formerly a captain assigned to Fire Station No. Two), and inquired about the detail of fireman Norvell Wallace on the night of April 3, 1968.

Johnson confirmed that he was Wallace's commanding officer on the night in question and did receive a telephone call requesting him to detail Wallace to Fire Station No. 33. He said the telephone call was from someone in the personnel department, but he does not recall who it was at this time. However, he stated that it had to have been someone higher up, since they operate similar to a military organization.


James F. Walker, Attorney
Department of Justice

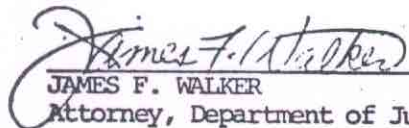
Memorandum of Interview with James H. Lesar
1231 4th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C.
Telephone 484-6023

On December 13, 1976, I telephoned James H. Lesar, Esquire, current counsel for James Earl Ray, concerning the possibility of interviewing Ray. Lesar confirmed that he was still counsel for Ray, but said his policy was not to permit any interview of Ray as long as his case was before the Court. I told Lesar that we wanted to interview Ray because of the allegations he made regarding a conspiracy in connection with the murder of Dr. King. Lesar said that Ray's constitutional rights had been violated and the proper remedy was a new trial under traditional procedure.

Lesar further stated that there are 14 volumes of Ray's testimony before the U.S. District Court in Memphis which testimony was given in connection with his motion for a new trial. Lesar claims that all of the facts are set out in that testimony and that Ray would not give any different information in an interview.

Lesar complained bitterly about difficulties he has encountered with the Department of Justice over a freedom of information request. He enumerated various instances wherein he alleged the Department had denied having certain documents or refused to give him copies of documents which admittedly existed. I assured Lesar that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Review Task Force had no jurisdiction over FOIA requests.

I telephoned Lesar a second time and inquired whether he had a copy of the transcript of Ray's testimony before the District Court. He said he did, but would permit me to make a copy only if I brought his unanswered letters and requests to the attention of the Attorney General and after he received a reply. I informed Lesar that, under the circumstances, I would bring his unanswered letters to the attention of Mike Shaheen and that I would look elsewhere for a copy of the transcript.



JAMES F. WALKER
Attorney, Department of Justice

Memorandum of Interview with James H. Lesar
1231 4th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C.
Telephone 484-6023
Office 223-5587

I telephoned James H. Lesar, Esquire, on December 14, 1976, and asked him whether he would reconsider our request to interview James Earl Ray in view of the U.S. Supreme Court decision yesterday denying his petition for certiorari. Lesar said he was writing Ray a letter today and would advise him of our desire to interview him and leave the matter up to him.

I informed Lesar that if an interview is to take place, the arrangements would have to be made as expeditiously as possible, since our report has to be submitted before the present Attorney General leaves office. Lesar said the letter would take about two days to reach Ray and he (Lesar) would call or we could call him in a few days.

I asked whether there would be any objections to us communicating directly with Ray. Lesar stated that he did not object to such a communication, provided the letter is sent through him.



JAMES F. WALKER
Attorney, Department of Justice

Interview of Richard E. Long

Mr. Richard E. Long was interviewed at his office on December 30, 1976 by James R. Kieckhefer. Mr. Long was the Headquarter's Supervisor for the MURKIN investigation in 1968, operating from the Civil Rights Unit of the General Investigative Division. Mr. Long is presently Assistant Director of the Finance and Personnel Division of the FBI.

Long advised that he was assigned the MURKIN investigation because he had geographical responsibility for the Memphis Field Office. On April 5, 1968, he and the Chief of the Civil Rights Section, Clem McGowan, went to see Assistant Director Alex Rosen regarding the investigation. Rosen inquired as to how Long would maintain a "tickler system." Long at a later time explained to Rosen how his tickler system would be formed and utilized. Long stated that he maintained the system with approximately 35 key classification. This system was retained in addition to the MURKIN file.

Long stated that each day there were prepared for the Director two daily reports, one in the morning (9:00 am.) and one in the afternoon (1:00 pm.). He was assisted in these reports by Supervisor Frank Hadson and Dick Bates of the Civil Rights Unit who would read the incoming teletypes with him. Long and Bill Martindale would then prepare the memo for the Director. The memo would be forwarded to McGowan for signature, then to James Malley, then to Rosen, and then to DeLoach. These were only reports of the current investigation and did not contain recommendations, said Long.

Long said that DeLoach would offer many suggestions. If a matter of importance was received, DeLoach would be called by telephone. Long advised that there were no limitations or restrictions on the investigation. However, this case was handled in a somewhat different manner because Headquarters had responsibility for the conduct of the case. Generally, the office of origin (Memphis) had this responsibility and would provide Headquarters with up-to-date reports on a case. Long said that he was instructed to use all manpower he felt necessary to complete a full investigation of the assassination.

Long related a story told him by Rosen regarding the search of fingerprint fugitive files. Rosen said that the Director believed, after some point in the investigation, that the assassin was a