

Extra funds delayed for assassination panel

Washington (AP)—Congressmen who got a preview of results of a \$5 million probe of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., say there are new details but no bombshells.

Two, who did not wish to be identified, said the most dramatic disclosure concerned an alleged offer by a group of St. Louis businessmen to pay \$50,000 for Dr. King's murder. But they said the investigation had not established the truth of the allegation. The committee reportedly has been investigating a St. Louis man's assertion that such an offer was made to him and that he turned it down.

FBI Director William H. Webster said Monday that an informant's report on the charge contained "hearsay three times removed."

Members of a House subcommittee considering the House Assassinations Committee's request for an additional \$800,000 got the preview in a closed-door briefing Monday.

The congressmen, who were told what the committee plans to disclose next week about the King assassination and in September about the Kennedy assassination, told reporters they were impressed with what they heard.

But after James Earl Ray's lawyer, Mark Lane, accused the committee of illegal undercover tactics, the subcommittee voted yesterday to hold up the \$800,000 request until after the committee's public hearings next week on the King assassination.

"Let's wait until we see the media reaction to their findings," said Representative John H. Dent (D., Pa.), the chairman of the House accounts subcommittee.

Mr. Lane made his accusation at a news conference in St. Louis. He was joined by a man named Oliver Patterson, who said he did the undercover work for a committee investigator.

Mr. Patterson, who called himself a former FBI informer, said he gave a committee investigator illegal tape recordings he made of telephone conversations with Ray and copies of letters between the convict and his brother, Jerry Ray, which Mr. Patterson stole.

Mr. Lane called for an investigation of the tactics and said two committee counsels should be disbarred for illegal acts which he did not describe.

James Earl Ray, serving a 99-year sentence for the murder of Dr. King April 4, 1968, is to testify for three days next week.

The ranking Republican, Representative Samuel L. Devine, of Ohio, said the panel needed another \$800,000 because the \$5 million the House has approved the last two years for the committee would run out about September 15.

Even though they held up the \$800,000, most of the subcommittee members said

the investigations had been thorough, and indicated they had succeeded primarily in disproving conspiracy theories in the two assassinations.

"They have done a creditable job and they'll ~~alway~~ some of the rumors that have cropped up," said Representative Mendel Davis (D., S.C.), who led the drive to hold up the money.

"As far as changing the course of history, I couldn't say that," he added.

Representative John L. Burton (D., Calif.) praised the investigations, saying, "They'll have some new facts and they'll knock down some of the theories that have been floating around."

Representative Robert E. Badham (R., Calif.) said the investigations had turned up new information in both investigations, but more in the King case than in the Kennedy assassination.