

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

DeLoach

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DeLoach	_____
Mohr	_____
Bishop	_____
Casper	_____
Callahan	_____
Conrad	_____
Felt	_____
Gale	_____
Rosen	_____
Sullivan	_____
Tavel	_____
Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Holmes	_____
Gandy	_____

TO : Mr. DeLoach

DATE: March 12, 1969

FROM : A. Rosen

1 - Mr. DeLoach

1 - Mr. Rosen

1 - Mr. Malley

1 - Mr. McGowan

1 - Mr. Long

SUBJECT: MURKIN

This is the case involving the murder of Martin Luther King.

Bob Owen, Deputy Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division, called to advise me that the Press Relations Office and the Attorney General's Office were considering making some statement to the effect that steps were being taken to interview James Earl Ray. He said there was a suggested statement to the effect the Department was continuing its inquiry into the possibility of a conspiracy and the facts developed during the past week would give rise to talking to Ray. Owen said this was not the exact language but this was the general idea which they had in mind.

Owen said he was opposed to making any statement because he thought this might have some affect upon our plan to try to talk to Ray and he wondered what our position in the matter was.

I told him we were trying to get permission from Canale, from the warden of the penitentiary at Nashville, Tennessee, and from Percy Foreman to conduct such an interview. In addition, Ray was being processed through the penitentiary at this time and we do not know whether permission would be granted by the warden; we do not know where Percy Foreman is although we believe he is at Houston, Texas; and consequently we have to clear all this before we can actually say we are allowed to interview Ray. I advised him any premature statement at this time about our plan to interview Ray or that we were taking steps to try to interview him might preclude this opportunity. I advised him this was my personal opinion and I would want to have this taken under consideration before giving him any answer.

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Owen also mentioned he understood Bradford Huie was on TV last night and made the comment he had not been able to come up with any evidence of any conspiracy although he had talked with Ray and had been of the opinion at the start when he wrote the story on Ray that such a conspiracy might have existed but he said he has not come up with anything to indicate that there was a conspiracy.

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Memorandum to Mr. DeLoach
Subject: MURKIN

ACTION TAKEN:

I called Owen back and advised him it was the Bureau's view that any comment at this time would be premature and might preclude the possibility of our getting an opportunity to talk with Ray and also to have him talk with us if we do get such permission unencumbered by the possibility of news comment.

Owen said if we do get permission to talk to Ray from Canale, the warden, and Attorney Percy Foreman that he would want to know beforehand but that insofar as we were concerned we could go ahead with the interview.

But even then no public statement should be made as press & TV would descend on Penitentiary en masse.

X

Dick

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