

INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION
OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS
OF THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

NOVEMBER 27, 28, 29, AND 30, 1978

VOLUME VII

Printed for the use of the Select Committee on Assassinations



Compliments of
Beverly B. Byron, M.C.

It arrested a man finally, as to whom there is very substantial direct evidence that he was at least in the environs and had done a lot of things that seemed to be related to the possibility.

I enjoy admitting mistakes. I can't tell you that I am able to say that this was one. I believe that the judgment was right, that the FBI pursued this with keenest desire and made a prodigious effort, and without a lot of breaks that you often get, finally apprehended someone who pled guilty.

I regretted at the time, I regret still, that there was a plea of guilty. I thought history was entitled to more. Although I think an individual has a right to plead guilty if he chooses that the public can't deny to satisfy its concern for history.

I would like to see that trial happen. I would like for history to be more assured. But history is rarely assured about assassinations. There is something in us that finds some so horrible and unacceptable.

I think the FBI was probably the only available agency. To sit here now and think of the appearance of conflict of interest is to ignore some overwhelming facts: That it had the confidence of the vast majority of the people of the United States—that is my judgment—to a higher degree than it had mine; that it had the confidence of the President of the United States; that it had some 7,700 agents that were pretty darned good investigators.

We needed them in an emergency. We used them.

Chairman STOKES. Thank you very much.

I have no further questions.

At this time the Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Preyer.

Mr. PREYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is good to have you here today, Mr. Clark.

I wanted to clear up one point for the record which I may not have understood correctly in the first place.

You mentioned that when Robert Kennedy was Attorney General he had a habit of signing papers and you would find the papers stuffed in his pockets, or in drawers, in his desk. Is that right?

Mr. CLARK. Let me restate that and say that it is probably an unfair characterization. He was a bundle of energy and impatient with details. Filing wasn't one of his personal strengths.

My impression coming in later—and it was augmented by what I had seen—I had seen him walking around with paper sticking out of his pockets, you know, and they looked kind of crumpled.

But the characterization that I made was based upon coming in more than 2 years after he left office, and trying to reconstruct his methodology in approving wiretaps and bugs.

That became a fairly significant and essentially, I think, unrelated reason, that there was a controversy at the time between Mr. Hoover and Robert Kennedy as to who authorized all these bugs that had been placed on people that were allegedly involved in organized crime.

I felt an obligation to the Department and the former Attorney General and the Director to find out what I could about it.

We found copies of these things scattered hither and yon. I mean, as I recall, we found some in a desk that he had used. We found some in files where they would never have been found