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 9, AND 10, 1978
VOLUME IV

Printed for the use of the Select Committee on Assassinations
McMillan does not mention Redditt in his book.

Lane writes that King's supporters asked for security, that they knew that Redditt was there, but were not notified when Redditt was removed.

Lane writes that transfers of blacks (including Redditt) raised serious questions that the prosecution would have had a hard time responding to at a trial.

Lane comments on Harold Weisberg's reference to Redditt as police spy.

Lane makes reference to the start of his interviews with Redditt.

Lane asks why Redditt was pulled off his assignment. Suggests that answer may have gone up in smoke with Memphis D.I.D. files.

Lane speaks of his first awareness of the "strange circumstances" surrounding Redditt's removal before King's death. He says the question was not even considered by the Justice Department until July of '76.

Lane says Justice Department contemplated why Redditt was removed from post two hours before murder.
courtyard, go up the circle of steps, go west—go east again and then to room 306. Would I be correct about that?

Mr. REDDITT. You would be correct.

Mr. JOHNSON. All right. Now I direct your attention to page 131 of Mark Lane’s book, and I am directing your specific attention to the third paragraph.

Mr. REDDITT. Which book is that, counsel?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is Code Name “Zorro”, The Murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., Mark Lane and Dick Gregory, which has been marked as exhibit F-185.

Now let me read to you, Mr. Redditt, from the third paragraph here. It says:

According to Redditt

I am quoting now, at least Mark Lane is quoting you, I gather • • •

about half an hour, no more than 2 hours before Dr. King’s assassination lieutenant Arkin, who was in intelligence, came down to the station. He said, Ed, they want to see you at headquarters. Redditt was reluctant to leave his post, to abandon the entire security operation to Richmond. Redditt had difficulty leaving, since his plus to run without escape from the scene, should there be an attempt on Dr. King’s life, was predicated upon a functioning Loam of at least two men.

Now my question to you, Mr. Redditt, does Mr. Lane in his quote here adequately set out the situation of that afternoon?

Mr. REDDITT. No. No.

Mr. JOHNSON. Then, as this appeared in Mr. Lane’s book, it is absolutely erroneous; am I correct about that?

Mr. REDDITT. Correct.

Mr. JOHNSON. I have no further questions.

Chairman STOKES. The gentleman is recognized for 1 minute, Mr. FAUNTYROY.

Mr. FAUNTYROY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two quick questions.

Mr. REDDITT. Mr. Newsum in fact performed respect to the actual event of would have performed had you Mr. REDDITT. I missed that. I Mr. FAUNTYROY. Yes. I mean please forgive me. Mr. Richmond.

Mr. REDDITT. Would you a man?

Mr. FAUNTYROY. You indicate you would have contacted sec you seen it from that windo Richmond?

Mr. REDDITT. I am not aware Mr. FAUNTYROY. You don’t kn Second, I have just this q perhaps an extended answer h tion of conspiracy that has con in Memphis and in the fire st is that you were stripe police chief who, prior to bee been for 25 years employed b period very close to J. Edgar F your stripping had to do with chief felt merited his removing I wonder if you would just, l to the committee how you thin of conspiracy.

Mr. REDDITT. Quite a task.

Mr. FAUNTYROY. Yes, it is.

Mr. SMOTHERS. Congressman, completely clear to the witness own testimony or with respe been considered by this com Mr. FAUNTYROY. I am asking own knowledge of his own re reasons for his removal.

Chairman STOKES. The time Chair will permit the witness Mr. REDDITT. I think, again I received or know of or have involve within the total my function in the police de not add anything, was not a p scheme or a plan or a conspi Mr. FAUNTYROY. Thank you. the question, and just to be cle a conspiracy, you do not belie Mr. REDDITT. Correct.
March 20, 1968 (continued)

On 3/20/68 two instances of Strul and threats were made to burn down both 1

Luther King Jr. And an obscene telephone

and on 3/22/68, the date of the propos

Councilman, Jerred Blanchard

On 3/20/68 Black Power Groups

South Memphis intimidating teachers and s

Luther King Jr. And an obscene telephone

Councilman, Jerred Blanchard

On 3/20/68 Black Power Groups

South Memphis intimidating teachers and s

rumor

us

Minister, Rev. Ezekiel Bell had made

memome and speak at his church.

On 3/20/68 Local Black Power m

other Black Power advocates went to the p

demanded that he be allowed to speak to the

he was however told to leave.

Intelligence sources revealed the

planned march on March 22, 1968 was in the

leadership in the march was in the hands of

James Morris Lawson Jr., pastor of Cente

Gerald Erasion, another Negro leader was e

ducing lot at Club Paradise on the high

cast over WLOK. Furthermore on 3/20/68

Luther King, SCLC leader with leftist leani

in the march was in the hands of a

besides at LeMoyne College referrin

in the march was in the hands of a

The students of LeMoyne College observed the

Police assignments remained con

of garbage trucks throughout the City, a

strations, as well as the regular neighborh

March 21, 1968

On 3/21/68 City Council member

J.O. Patterson's proposal allowing a dues

J.O. Patterson's proposal calling for med

down with Frank B. Miles, a former Federa

On 3/21/68 Dr. Martin Luther King

organizing his Poor People's Campaign, a

symbol of the campaign. In Memphis he th

received a telephoned threat on the Life's a

a man with what was described as having an
April 1, 1968 (continued)

Threads against the Memphis Police came from a number of sources between 3:30/68 and 4/1/68. On one occasion, U.S. Civil Rights Commission worker, Rosetta Miller, who had been participating in the demonstrations since the start of the sanitation strike, told Det. R. E. Roland, that they were going to get him, and if she had a gun herself, she would shoot him herself. This remark was made so baldly because it was known that Det. R. E. Roland was returning information from the meetings he attended to the Memphis Police Department.

On April 1, 1968 Larry Payne, a Male Negro launcher, who had been shot during the riots, after he had been found looting, and pulled a knife on a Police officer, was lying in state in Clayborn Temple. The information being that his actions were sanctioned by C. O. M. E. and the negro ministers who divided on the issue of non-violence seemed to be occurring at this point in the direction of violence.

April 2, 1968

The Press Scimitar on 4/2/68 under a story captioned, MEMPHIS IN CORD, HAD NIGHT, quotes Asst. Chief Bill Price as reporting that activity during the night of 4/1/68 had been no greater than usual.

The Commercial Appeal carried a story under the caption: AUGUST IN DALL: ACCUSES KING OF SPARKING MEMPHIS CLASH in which Tennessee Congressman B. Clay Anderson on the House floor accused Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. of agitating destruction and hatred in Memphis.

In another story in the Commercial Appeal under the caption: CITY STEPS TO THEM AGAINST LEADERS, it was reported that Mayor Henry Loeb was studying what legal steps could be taken to prevent another mass march, and among the remedies considered were: Court Injunctions against Leaders; Removal of the Curfew; and the Firing of Leaders under Peace and Financial Responsibility.

In a story in the Press Scimitar of 4/2/68 under the caption: COUNCIL THREATENS NEW STRIKE ROLL, it was reported that the City Council was calling for restraints of mediation talks with the Garbage Strikers.

C. O. M. E. held a strategy meeting at Clayborn Temple at 10AM on 4/2/68 in which the ministers associated explored the possibility of securing O. E. O. and W. P. C. money to pay for an office for them, and their operations. At another meeting with C. O. M. E. leaders of the LorRawna Motel 4PM 4/2/68, some of the leaders debated the removal of James Morris Lancon as leader of COB.

The body of Larry Payne who had been shot during the riots 3/25/68 and who had been lying in state at Clayborn Temple since 4/1/68 was viewed by thousands of strikers and Strike Sympathizers. The Funeral was held in the Temple in the afternoon with the Rev. E. T. Damas officiating. Interment was in the New Park Cemetery on Lake Road. No incidents were reported during the Funeral.

Bayard Rustin of the A. Phiols Randolph Inst., and Victor Gollman, head director of the National Council 6 of the A. CSOME Inst., stated that 6000 people would converge on Memphis for the Martin Luther King Jr.

Intelligence sources revealed that C. E. Smith and other bureau leaders were meeting with other black activists and King aides, and in Memphis, Mayor King was being planned for 4/2/68 and 3PM in re: the funding of the Bureau by NaACP.

April 2, 1968 a Mr. Robert Campbell of 3 Atl. Smith received a telephone call from Colonel who stated the headquarter of the US. Civil Rights Commission because it was known that Det. E. L. Ferguson was returning information from the riot leaders.

On one occasion, U.S. Civil Rights Commission did not receive a telephone call from Colonel who was a reliable man, who stated the headquarter of the US. Civil Rights Commission because it was known that Det. E. L. Ferguson was returning information from the riot leaders.


In an interview with Inspector Thomas on 4/2 of a local Negro Minister, accused Rev. James Morris of the riot on 3/25/68. He also accused Lawson and others of being an "agitator of the Garbage Strikers."

Spokesman for the Negro Ministers in Welfare Group and the Garbage Strikers hold a Mass Meeting at the Temple in the afternoon, Saturday, 7 reported instances of strike oriented harassment.

Under the caption of DAY OF DECISIONS, the Commercial Appeal of 4/3/68 carried a picture of Mayor Henry Loeb, and Direct the Federal Building, reenacting the National March to be led by Mayor by Dr. L. Mason. The picture shows a picture of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Commercial Appeal of 4/3/68 under the headline: "ANY COURT RANS, carried a story of a strike activity, "such things as injunctions or peace under a mattress."
that I was an active par-
King. I had not a scintilla
in my life has been
in the city knowing full well
evidenced by the fact a
while and would not have extreme
e was at the fire station. 
years is that the threat
this city knowing full well
that action be taken to
maligned and slandered—apparently without recourse.

Detective Redditt did not at that time, nor has he since, questioned

Memoranda prepared contemporane-

The records will reflect Detective Redditt was removed from his

There apparently has been a persistent effort to prove a theory

I have been deeply disturbed that in view of my public service

Dr. King and his death give unequivocal

In view of the physical location of the fire station, it would have

The records will reflect Detective Redditt was removed from his

I have been deeply disturbed that in view of my public service

I have been deeply disturbed that in view of my public service

Dr. King and that I, because of my past association with the FBI,

Dr. King and that I, because of my past association with the FBI,

Dr. King and that I, because of my past association with the FBI,