

FBI

Date: 1/23/69

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
FROM: SAC, PHILADELPHIA (44-1368)(P)
SUBJECT: MURKIN

6/1/5
100-438794
157-2808

Re Philadelphia teletypes dated 1/19/69 and 1/21/69.

Enclosed herewith for the Bureau are 11 copies of an LHM titled as above.

Copies are being furnished locally to MI, NISO, OSI, Secret Service, and USA, EDPa.

One copy of this LHM is being forwarded Atlanta for information since Atlanta is OO in SCLC. Two copies are being furnished Memphis since Memphis is OO MURKIN.

This LHM is classified confidential to protect identity of [redacted] continues to furnish excellent information concerning racial and security matters.

Source utilized in the LHM is [redacted]

When interviewed on 1/21/69, agents had to wait 30 minutes for BEVEL because BEVEL was holding a meeting in the next room.

REC-39 1/21/69 5306

- 5 - Bureau (RM) (Encs. 11)
- 3 - 44-38861
- 1 - 100-438794 (SCLC)
- 1 - 157-10808 (JAMES BEVEL)
- 1 - Atlanta (SCLC) (Info) (RM) (Enc. 1)
- 2 - Memphis (44-1987)(MURKIN)RM (Encs. 2)
- 5 - Philadelphia
- 1 - 44-1987 (MURKIN)
- 1 - 100-47194 (SCLC)
- 1 - 157-1214 (RACIAL DISTURBANCES - MAJOR URBAN AREA)
- 1 - 157-2979 (JAMES BEVEL)
- 1 - 170-53 (PH 897-R)

25 JAN 29 1969

Form 6-94
1 of CIVIL RIGHTS UNIT
JAN 29 1969

ENCLOSURE
157-2808

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

61 FEB 12 1969

PH 44-1368

For the information of Atlanta, BEVEL is currently employed at the Health and Welfare Council, Inc., 1428 Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa., telephone CE 2-9911.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

January 23, 1969

JAMES EARL RAY;
MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

Reverend James Bevel was interviewed at his residence, 919 North 18th Street, Philadelphia, Pa., on January 21, 1969. The following are the results of this interview:

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.

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Date 1/23/69

Reverend JAMES BEVEL was interviewed for ten minutes at his residence. He stated he was extremely busy as he had appointments through 11:00 p.m. that day. While the interview was in progress, a woman asked BEVEL if he could speak to a member of the press. BEVEL told her to tell the person on the telephone he was tied up until 11:00 p.m.

BEVEL stated he had proof of the innocence of JAMES EARL RAY in connection with the murder of his good friend Reverend MARTIN LUTHER KING. BEVEL referred to KING as one of his closest and dearest friends. BEVEL stated that since the FBI was connected with the prosecution and he was involved with the defense, he felt he should not furnish this information.

It was pointed out to BEVEL that the FBI is an investigative agency and does not prosecute anyone. It was also pointed out to BEVEL that the FBI is as interested in proving a person's innocence as proving a person's guilt. BEVEL was advised the FBI was interested in obtaining and proving all facts possible during any investigation.

BEVEL stated he sent a telegram to RAY on Saturday, January 18, 1969, and as of the date of the interview, he had received no answer to his telegram. BEVEL stated in connection with this he planned to call PERCY FOREMAN, Attorney for RAY on the night of January 21, 1969, and offer his services in connection with RAY's defense.

BEVEL stated he would telephone the contacting agents on January 22, 1969, and advise if FOREMAN accepted his offer. BEVEL stated if FOREMAN does not accept his offer to aid the defense, he, BEVEL, plans to drop the entire matter as he feels he has no moral obligation towards RAY to produce his evidence of RAY's innocence if his offer of help is refused.

It was pointed out to BEVEL that if he had evidence of RAY's innocence, it should be brought to the attention of the court. BEVEL again stated he would do so only if he was allowed to be part of RAY's defense.

BEVEL stated that at the time MARTIN LUTHER KING

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On 1/21/69 at Philadelphia, Pa. 2 File# Philadelphia 44-1368

by SA [redacted] and SA [redacted] Date dictated 1/22/69

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44-1369

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was shot at the Loraine Motel in Memphis, he was standing on the ground underneath the balcony where KING was shot.

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JAMES EARL RAY
MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

On January 22, 1969, Special Agent [REDACTED] telephonically attempted to contact Reverend Bevel at approximately 2:30 p.m. The person answering stated Reverend Bevel would not return until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

January 23, 1969

*In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.*

Title JAMES EARL RAY;
MARTIN LUTHER KING - VICTIM

Character

Reference Memorandum dated and captioned as
above at Philadelphia, Pa.

All sources (except any listed below) whose identities
are concealed in referenced communication have furnished reliable
information in the past.