FBI 1/23/69 Date: Transmit the following in ____ (Type in plaintext or code) Via AIRTEL (Priority) TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861) FROM: SAC, PHILADELPHIA (44-1368)(P) SUBJECT **URKIN** 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 00 in SCLC. Two copies are being furnished Memphis since Memphis is 00 MURKIN. 1 6-04 h 7 4 This LHM is classified confidential to protect identity of il. ontinues to turnish excellent information concerning racial and security matters. 30 Source utilized in the LHM is Mien interviewed on 1/21/69, agents had to wait 30 minutes for BEVEL because BEVEL was holding a meeting in Bureau (RM) (Encs. 11) 3 - 44-38861 - 100-438794 (SCLC) JAN 20 1969 1969 1 - 157-10808 (JAMES REVEL) - Atlanta (SCLC) (Info) (RM)(Enc. 1) RIGHTS 0 2 - Memphis (44-1987)(MURKIN)RM) 62 5 - Philadelphia (Encs. 2) CEAL 1 - 44-1987 (MURKIN) 1 - 100-47194 (SCLC) - 157-1214 (RACIAL DISTURBANCES - MAJOR - 157-2979 (JAMES REVEL) URBAN AREA) - 170-53 (PH 897-R) bevor Rb1 239661 Agent in Charge Sent Per

PH 44-1368

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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.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JU CICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Januarv 23, 1969

Reply, Please Refer to

File No.

JAMES HARL 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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Date 1/23/69

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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.

REVEL stated that at the time MARTIN LUTHER KING

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On 1/21/69 of Philadelphia, Pa. 7Flle# Philadelphia 44-1368	- ^
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was shot at the Loraine Motel in Memphia, he was standing on the ground underneath the balcony where KING was shot.

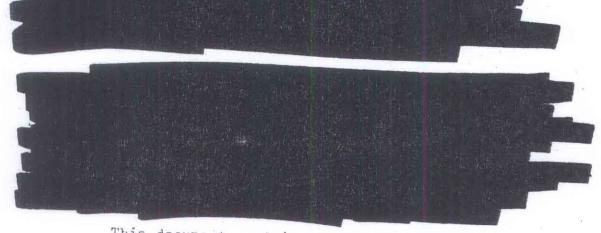
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MARTIN LUTURE KING - VICTIM

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



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U.S.

UN1 .D STATES DEPARTMENT OF J TICE 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.

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