

APR 18

Judge Rules Panel Can Have Grace Walden's Medical Files

Probate Judge Joseph W. Evans has ruled that the Congressional Select Committee on Assassinations is entitled to have the medical records of Grace E. Walden, who claimed to be an eyewitness in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King.

The committee's subpoena of the records had been refused by Western Mental Health Institute at Bolivar where Mrs. Walden had been committed for several years until her release April 25, 1978. The committee's petition for their release was opposed by Mark Lane, attorney for both Mrs. Walden and James Earl Ray, convicted of King's assassination.

Mrs. Walden has testified that Ray was not the man she saw coming out of the rear bathroom at Bessie Brewer's rooming house at 422½ S. Main from which the fatal shot had just been fired on April 8, 1968.

Mrs. Walden is now a resident of California, where Lane took her after he was declared her co-guardian along with Memphis attorney Duncan Ragsdale.

The House committee is now taking tes-

timony from Ray who said that he met a man named Raoul, whom he said was the real killer, in Jim's Grill below his room at the rooming house, shortly before the assassination. He said the grill had two waitresses, one of whom was there and saw him. He could not be sure which one. He said shortly after meeting Raoul, at the time King was killed, he had left the grill and was at a filling station getting a tire fixed.

Time has begun to erode the scene of Ray's alibi in Memphis.

Bessie Brewer's rooming house and Jim's Grill are both padlocked and boarded up. Paint is beginning to crumble. The rooming house sign is faded and dim. The sign hanging over the sidewalk in front of Jim's Grill is rusting. Young trees are rapidly growing up behind the rooming house and along the south wall, obscuring the window from which the fatal shot was fired.

Other stores in the block are also vacant and boarded up.

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