

Wednesday, March 30, 1977

# Ex-Officer Quoted on King Plot

## Louisville Police, FBI Agents Accused

From Herald Wire Services

WASHINGTON — An ex-police-  
man claims that police and federal  
law officers tried to implicate him  
in an assassination plot against Dr.  
Martin Luther King Jr. in 1965.

Clifton Baird, 50, a former mem-  
ber of the Louisville Police Depart-  
ment told the House Assassination  
Committee that fellow police offi-  
cers and FBI agents offered him  
\$500,000 to kill King, Scripps-  
Howard investigative reporters  
Carl West and Tim Wyngaard said.

They said sources close to the  
assassination committee reported  
Baird believed his police superiors  
at the time of the alleged conspira-  
cy thought he was involved in a  
dynamite ring operation in western  
Kentucky and hence could be pres-  
sured into taking part in the al-  
leged plot to kill King.

HE LATER WAS cleared of any

connection with the dynamite con-  
spiracy and House sources concede  
there is no apparent connection be-  
tween the alleged 1965 plot and  
the 1968 Memphis murder.

Scripps-Howard said Baird had a  
2½-hour session with House inves-  
tigators and turned over a tape  
from a recorder allegedly hidden  
beneath the front seat of his car in  
which a Louisville lawman dis-  
cussed the assassination offer.

"Veteran Louisville policemen  
say they are 'stunned and puzzled'  
by Baird's charges and categori-  
cally deny them. Similar denials have  
been made by FBI agents assigned  
to Louisville in the mid-1960s," the  
report said.

Baird, who retired in 1975 from  
the Louisville police force after 27  
years, now is employed as a private  
security guard there.

Meanwhile, assassinations com-  
mittee investigators aren't talking  
about their latest interview in Pet-  
ros, Tenn., with convicted murder-  
er James Earl Ray.

RAY'S ATTORNEY, Jack Ker-  
shaw of Nashville, said a decision  
will be made April 11 on whether  
to allow Ray to take a polygraph  
test on his role in the King slaying.

Ray, interviewed at Brushy  
Mountain State Prison, is serving a  
99-year sentence for King's mur-  
der.

Ray pleaded guilty to the crime  
in 1969, but has since attempted to  
retract the plea, contending he was  
misled by his first attorney, Percy  
Foreman.

The investigators questioned Ray  
for more than six hours.