

Parade 6/24/73

Q. Can you find out why the late J. Edgar Hoover hated the late Martin Luther King so much? Was it because King enjoyed a free-wheeling sex life, and Hoover had none? Was it because Hoover was white, and King was black? Why did Hoover wiretap King so consistently and leak evidence of King's sex life to the press?—N. L., Macon, Ga.

A. In 1962 and 1963 Dr. King criticized the FBI for dragging its feet in civil rights cases. Enraged by the criticism of his bureaucratic child, the FBI, and suspicious of King's associates, Hoover had the civil rights leader tailed and wiretapped throughout the country. A man of strong sexual appetites, King was an easy mark for electronic surveillance. When Dr. King won the Nobel Peace Prize, Hoover was further enraged, sought to undermine the achievement by highlighting King's marital infidelity. Arthur Murtagh, 51, of Constable, N.Y., a lawyer who retired from the FBI after 21 years of service, 11 of which he spent in Atlanta, King's hometown, is writing a book which deals in part with the battle of Hoover versus King.