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King-Assassin 280

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. AP - The task of finding the person who killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. apparently has settled down to the grueling police routine of sifting every clue and checking every lead.

There was no talk of an early arrest, as there had been shortly after King was assassinated last Thursday night. Robert G. Drewry and John C. Moore, the two U.S. commissioners here, said they had not been approached to issue a fugitive warning by either the FBI or the U.S. attorney.

The Memphis Commercial Appeal reported today that the city's fire and police director is investigating the possibility that someone used the police radio frequency to draw officers off the trail of the fleeing assassin.

The paper said in a copyright story that Frank C. Holloman, Memphis fire and police director, "would only say last night that such a possibility is under investigation."

The paper said radio transmissions indicated Lt. R. W. Bradshaw in police car 160 was speeding after a white Mustang, suspected as a possible getaway car, following the shooting.

Holloman "did confirm that Lt. Bradshaw in car 160 was 'in the area' of the reported chase, but not involved in the case" the paper said.

"I was not chasing a white Mustang," the paper quoted Bradshaw as saying. "Any other information will have to come from the chief."

"The police dispatcher relayed seven transmissions-supposedly from Lt. Bradshaw in car 160-between 6:35 p.m. and 6:47 p.m. last Thursday," the paper said, "little more than a half-hour after Dr. King was shot by a sniper outside the Lorraine Motel."

The paper said the messages described the route of the chase, said that a blue Pontiac was also chasing the Mustang and said shots were fired from the Mustang at the Pontiac.

The Commercial Appeal quoted a police source as saying officers in a sheriff's patrol car and a Tennessee Highway Patrol cruiser stationed along the route of the chase "neither heard the shooting in the area, nor did they see the autos supposedly involved in the chase."

As federal officials pressed their manhunt, there were reports of arrests in various parts of the country and of a widespread search in Mexico.

The Mexican rumor started after Rolando Veloz, the Mexican counsel here, told authorities there was a resemblance between a composite sketch carried in a local newspaper and a young man who applied for a tourist card the day before King was shot.

The young man turned out to be a 19-year-old student at Memphis State University, Memphis police said. They said what was thought to be a false address and phone number were those of his father in Park Ridge, Ill. They dismissed the possibility that he was connected with the case.

In Washington, the Justice Department denied that the investigation had extended into Mexico. The Memphis Commercial Appeal said however it had learned that the FBI had contacted the central police office in Mexico City.

It was learned that the gun found abandoned in a doorway next to the building from which police say the shot was fired was not among those stolen from a sporting goods store two days before the slaying.

B.C. Dowdle, proprietor of the store, said a police detective telephoned him the serial number of the Remington pump action rifle that was found and asked him to check it against the numbers of the store's guns.

"I was relieved to know that the gun didn't come from my shop," Dowdle said.

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