

'Suicide' Tape To Dr. King

Washington

The FBI Sent a letter and tape recording to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in late 1964 that the black leader came to believe was an effort to drive him to suicide, according to testimony and documents presented yesterday to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

In November, 1964, 34 days before King was to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, the material showed, he received a letter and a tape recording from an anonymous sender.

The tape recording was allegedly of unsavory activities engaged in by King, according to committee sources.

It was accompanied by an unsigned note that read "King there is only one thing left for you to do. You know what it is. You have just 34 days in which to do it. (This exact number has been selected for a specific reason.) It has definite practical significance. You are done. There is but one way out for you."

The committee staff has established that the tape recording was obtained from an electronic surveillance device placed by the FBI and then sent to King by FBI officials.

The material presented by the committee staff also showed that FBI officials wrote the letter.

It was part of a six-year effort to discredit the leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, according to testimony. A month after this tape was mailed, the FBI secretly sent another tape, also of unsavory matters and possibly of the same incident to Coretta King, the committee staff confirmed. The New York Times reported on this mailing earlier this year.

Mrs. King told The Times that she and her husband had listened to that tape and concluded that it had nothing on it that would discredit King.

The report on King and other facets of the FBI's 50-year-long domestic intelligence operations were presented to the committee by its counsel F. A. O. Schwarz, and minority counsel, Kurt Smothers, in a five-hour session.

Schwarz told the committee that the staff had discovered a memorandum to the late director J. Edgar Hoover, from William J. Sullivan, then chief of counterintelligence, that suggested the bureau discredit King by "knocking him off his pedestal." This plan went forward, Schwarz said.

The FBI instituted 16 separate wiretaps and eight room bugs to trace King's movements and activities that produced liter-

Back Page Col. 1

From Page 1

ally "thousands of hours" of tapes.

Schwarz said that at each point King appeared to be getting public recognition — the Nobel Peace Prize, the march on Washington in 1963, the "Poor People's Campaign" and being picked Man of the Year by Time magazine — were occasions for the FBI to redouble its efforts to "discredit or destroy" the black leader.

Yet, Schwarz said, there is no indication that the FBI ever established that King was a national security threat, posed the danger of public violence or was a criminal suspect.

Moreover, the committee staff testimony showed, Hoover ordered other officials to rewrite reports that indicated King was apparently not a threat to this country. The officials changed

ed after a lengthy investigation that the aim of such groups was to "free women of the humdrum existence of being only a wife and mother . . . and they wanted equal opportunity that men have in work." Despite these conclusions, the investigators were told to continue to monitor such groups closely.

In two cases cited, the FBI sent anonymous letters to the spouses of white individuals active in black causes, suggesting that their husband or wife was being unfaithful. A similar letter was sent to the wife of a Klan leader in the hope that resulting marital discord would disrupt Klan activities.

their reports, the staff members testified, in fear of their jobs.

Among other intelligence activities described yesterday:

- A 1970 FBI memo ordered investigations of all black student unions and similar student groups.

- At one point investigations of all anti-war groups was ordered.

- In 1968, Hoover sent a memo to FBI offices outlining a need to investigate neighborhood groups opposed to the busing of school children for purposes of integration.

- When an FBI report on an unnamed individual concluded he was "not pro-Communist," the FBI sent the agents back for further investigation because the report did not "prove he was anti-Communist."

- Infiltrators into the women's liberation movement concluded

- "Dirty tricks" were not uncommon. The FBI made phony room reservations for demonstrators at the 1968 Democratic national convention and again in Washington for the 1969 presidential inauguration.

- The lists of "subversive"



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Counsels F.A.O. Schwarz (right) and Kurt Smothers testified before the Senate intelligence committee

and "violence prone" individuals maintained and investigated by the FBI included many black

ministers never involved in demonstrations.

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