

False Police Reports of Chase After Dr. King's Death Give Impetus to Conspiracy Theories

By MARTIN WALDRON
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MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 10 —A false Memphis police report broadcast shortly after the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. last Thursday night has given impetus to speculation that the civil rights leader was the victim of a conspiracy.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Memphis police have said for several days that the killing was done by one man.

Memphis policemen who were searching for Dr. King's killer on the night he was shot were drawn to the north side of the city 34 minutes after the shooting by a false report from "police car 160" that a white Mustang automobile, believed to be the getaway car, was speeding along city streets.

Detectives have been investigating the possibility that the report was relayed by an accomplice of the killer to the central police radio in an effort to keep attention away from an escape to the south.

Intensive Inquiry

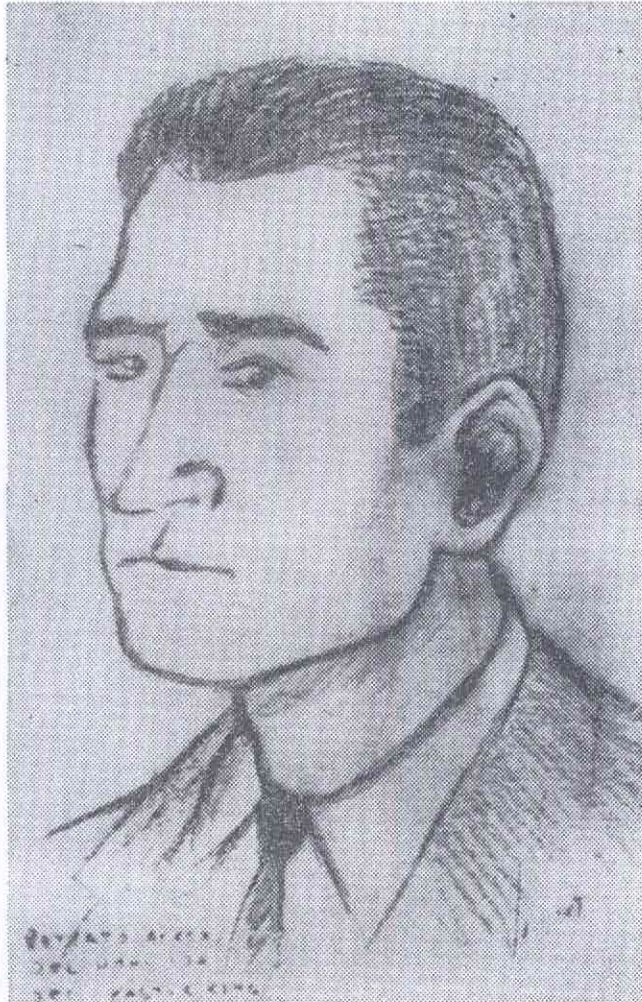
Frank C. Holloman, director of the Memphis Fire and Police Departments, said that the possibility of such a fraudulent police report by an accomplice of the killer was under "intensive investigation."

One purpose of the investigation, Mr. Holloman said, is to determine whether someone had used a transmitter tuned to a police department frequency to relay misleading information that would draw police attention to north Memphis while the killer escaped across the Mississippi River into Arkansas or down U.S. Highway 55 into the State of Mississippi.

"We have this aspect as well as some other aspects of this case under investigation at this time," said Mr. Holloman. "Beyond that I cannot comment."

Mr. Holloman, who is a retired F.B.I. inspector, refused today to say if he now believed that more than one person was involved in the slaying of Dr. King.

"I just can't comment on that," he said.



The assassin of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in an artist's sketch being distributed throughout Mexico.

Last week, Mr. Holloman agreed with a statement by Attorney General Ramsey Clark that the slaying appeared to have been done by only one person.

Although both Mr. Holloman and Attorney General Clark have said that the slaying was extremely well planned, they said that there was no evidence indicating that more than one person had been involved.

Mr. Holloman also declined today to predict an early solution to the slaying.

The false police report was broadcast at 6:35 P.M., a little more than a half-hour after the fatal shot was fired. At that time the police were setting up road blocks around the city.

The report said that a white Mustang was headed east in

north Memphis and being chased by police car 160.

A short time before that, the police radio had broadcast an alert for a white Mustang with a radio antenna similar to those on automobiles equipped with citizen band radio receivers and transmitters.

At 6:36 P.M., the police radio reported that a blue hardtop 1966 Pontiac had joined the chase for the white Mustang.

In the next 10 minutes, several progress reports on the "chase" were relayed through the headquarters radio to other police cars headed to the area.

At 6:47 P.M., the police radio broadcast a report that someone in the white Mustang was shooting at the blue Pontiac.

That ended the broadcasts about the chase.

The Commercial Appeal, a

Memphis newspaper, today quoted Lieut. R. W. Bradshaw, who was assigned to police car 160 that night, as having said that he saw no white Mustang and did not chase one that night.

Lieut. Bradshaw said today that any comment would have to come from Mr. Holloman.

A Memphis television station, WMC-TV, said tonight that a local radio equipment dealer had reported that he had been monitoring police radio calls immediately after Dr. King's shooting and had heard the calls supposedly made from police car 160.

The equipment dealer's monitor, the television station said, was of such a nature that it could not have received the calls if they had been made in the area where police car 160 was located at the time.

The calls, the television station said, must have been made from an automobile in the downtown area.

The radio equipment dealer declined to be interviewed, the station but had given his information to the police.

Radio experts said that it would be difficult for someone with a citizens band radio to transmit to police headquarters as if the message were coming from a police car. It would require extensive modification of the radio and would have to be done by someone with more than ordinary knowledge, a radio expert said.

Set Aside by F.C.C.

Radio frequencies for citizens band radios are set aside by the Federal Communications Commission to be used by private business and individuals.

It is a violation of Federal law to transmit on radio frequencies set aside for police departments.

Investigation of the false chase reports came as the F.B.I., which has refused to comment on the case, was checking angles that had been ignored for several days.

This renewed activity by the Federal agents on old leads has been taken to mean that some, perhaps much, of the "unusually large amount of physical evidence" that attorney General Clark said had been left at the scene of the shooting may have been part of a false trail left by the sniper.

Last Friday, Rolando Veloz

Canales, the Mexican counsel at Memphis, reported that a young man with a sharp nose had gotten a travel permit to go to Mexico the day before Dr. King was killed. The address and telephone number on the application for the permit were false.

4-Day Delay Reported

Mr. Veloz said that although this information was made available to the police on Friday, the day after Dr. King was killed, the F.B.I. did not check it with him until Tuesday.

The police said today that the permit had been applied for by a 19-year-old student who had given his age as 21. The address and telephone number were supposed to have been those of his father but were given incorrectly, the police said. The youth was reported to be in Arizona, and the police said that he had no connection with the slaying.

Unanswered questions that tend to suggest that Dr. King's death was the result of a conspiracy include the following:

Who was the white man with "something white" over his face that Dr. King's driver,

Solomon Jones Jr., saw leap from some bushes across the street from the murder scene immediately after the shot was fired?

Mr. Jones said that the man was near the bottom floor of the rooming house from which the police said the sniper shot Dr. King, and that he ran around the side of the rooming house building.

How did the killer know that Dr. King was in Room 306 of the Lorraine Hotel and Motel?

If the civil rights leader had been in a room nearer the front of the motel, his door would not have been visible to the sniper.

How was the assassination so "well planned" in such a short time?

The previous week, during a visit to Memphis, Dr. King had stayed in another motel and had been in the Lorraine only one day when the sniper moved into the rooming house and found the spot best suited to shoot from.

Why did the killer discard the .20-'06 caliber Remington rifle and a blue suitcase with a pair of binoculars in it on the

street in front of four witnesses?

He could have left them in his room or in the rooming house toilet if he had not wanted to call attention to himself by carrying them on the street.

Man Cleared in Missouri

JOPLIN, Mo., April 10 (AP)—A man who was questioned briefly about the slaying of Dr. King has been cleared of any connection with the case, the police said today.

The man, who identified himself as Lynn R. Cleveland, 33 years old, an itinerant preacher, received a three-day jail sentence in Magistrate's Court on a vagrancy charge.

F.B.I. Disclaims Sketch

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 10—The F.B.I. said today it had not distributed any sketch of the King assassin.

The sketch circulated in Mexico was apparently made from radio broadcasts giving the F.B.I.'s description. No sketch has been authorized by the F.B.I.