

# New start 13 years after

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WASHINGTON — The veteran prosecutor hired by the chairman of the House Select Committee on Assassinations to reinvestigate the murders of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is seeking permission to form the biggest investigative team ever assembled by Congress.

A month after he was appointed (he still needs approval by the full committee), Acting Chief Counsel Richard A. Sprague has concluded that a serious effort will require more money and manpower than Congress devoted to any of its recent major investigations, including the Nixon impeachment inquiry, the Senate Watergate hearings, or the probe of abuses by U.S. intelligence agencies.

In an interview, the 51-year-old Sprague, who prosecuted hundreds of murder cases in the course of a colorful career as an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia, also said he is seeking authority to use the most advanced

polygraph (lie detector) and voice stress evaluation technology.

"If there is to be an investigation it ought to be done thoroughly and adequately — or don't do it at all," Sprague said.

Sprague has said he will investigate both the Kennedy and King murders from "ground zero," just as he used to do as a prosecutor in Philadelphia, when police authorities were under orders to notify him at the same time the homicide squad was called in cases of murder.

"Of course, being in at ground zero then meant the bodies were still on the scene, not 13 years later," he acknowledged. But Sprague said his probe will go back and review in depth the initial investigations, re-examining testimony and evidence, as if for the first time.

The two murders, Sprague said, will be investigated simultaneously by separate staffs.

"To do a professional job, I'm talking about 170 people, and these are just minimum figures," Sprague said.