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Former Alderman Bibb says he thinks King 'plot' could have been a prank

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WASHINGTON — Former Louisville Alderman James Bibb said in an interview today that he thinks the alleged plot to assassinate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., which involved a number of former and present Louisville policemen, may have started as nothing more than a prank.

Bibb, a retired Louisville police lieutenant, is one of eight witnesses subpoenaed to appear before the King subcommittee of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. The subcommittee is investigating the 1968 murder of King in Memphis, Tenn., for which James Earl Ray was convicted.

Bibb said that from piecing together information while he has waited to testify before the subcommittee, he has learned that "one or two people might have been involved in a prank" that led to the investigation.

The subcommittee began investigating after U.S. Rep. Gene Snyder, Kentucky Republican whose 4th District includes much of suburban Jefferson County, reportedly testified that a constituent, Clifton E. Baird, had written him a letter alleging that Baird had been offered \$500,000 on two occasions to kill King. Baird is a retired Louisville police officer who served while Bibb was in office.

Bibb said he does not believe that

more than one or two of the eight witnesses called to testify know anything about the alleged plot.

And he said that from what he has gathered, he thinks all that the one or two witnesses know is that the whole affair began as some kind of prank, either on Baird or another officer in 1967.

"One or two people might have been involved in a prank that involved giving some kind of an offer of \$500,000" to kill King, Bibb said.

"When you're a police officer, you hear that kind of stuff and you screen it out," he said.

As the hearing entered its second day today, officials and witnesses continued to keep a tight lid on the proceedings, with committee members declining comment and witnesses still under orders not to talk. Bibb said he expected to be told not to talk after he testified.

The subcommittee subpoenaed five former Louisville police officers, one active-duty officer and two former Louisville FBI agents. Only two witnesses, Baird and William Duncan, were called yesterday, even though the proceedings were scheduled to last just one day.

Duncan and Bob Peters were identified as the former Louisville FBI agents called before the committee. Peters said

he has retired from the FBI and works for Ayr-Way Stores in Louisville. He said Duncan is assigned to the FBI office in St. Louis.

The other witnesses were identified as Ollie Blair, a former Louisville police officer who worked with Baird; Lt. Col. Priest Fry, the retired chief of detectives; Capt. Robert Gregory Jr., also a retired chief of detectives, and Lt. Brent Hardin.

Eagle-eyed Kentuckians are in luck this winter

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — Kentuckians are most likely to sight bald and golden eagles this time of year as the birds arrive on their annual migrations, according to Arnold Mitchell, state fish and wildlife resources commissioner.

The majority of eagle sightings occur in extreme Western Kentucky, along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. The Ballard County Wildlife Management Area and the Kentucky-Barkley Lakes region are good spots for eagle watches. Eagles also are seen occasionally around Lake Cumberland.

Eagles, like other birds of prey, are protected by state and federal laws. Federal penalties for shooting an eagle are a fine of up to \$5,000, a year in jail, or both.