

PROBE

Magazine. The truth is in here.

Vol. 7, No. 3 March-April, 2000

Probe is published by CTKA
Citizens for Truth about the Kennedy Assassination

Copyright ©2000. All Rights Reserved. \$5.00

The King Trial: What the Media Didn't Tell You

By Mike Vinson

DATE: APRIL 4, 1968

TIME: APPROXIMATELY 6 P.M.

LOCATION: JIM'S GRILL, BELOW BESSIE BREWER'S FLOPHOUSE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

What in the world is a man who looks like him doing in a rundown joint like this? Bessie Brewer, manager of Bessie Brewer's flophouse, quizzed herself. Trim, suit, well-groomed, late 30s, nice-looking fellow, he... just seems so out of place.

"John Willard," the man said, answering Mrs. Brewer's question, as well as signing the guest register as such, a forced smile betraying his somber attitude. However, he had good reason to have a somber attitude and be putting on a front: His real name was James Earl Ray, white, 40-years-old, a fugitive on the run and an escapee from the Missouri State Penitentiary.

Typical for a spring day in Tennessee, the temperature was cool—yet the mood hot! Reverend Martin Luther King was back in town to lead another march in favor of the Memphis sanitation workers, the majority black. The previous week's march, also led by King, had resulted in a disaster: one young, black male fatally shot, and many more blacks beaten and jailed. National Guardsmen on foot and in tanks were everywhere. Winos aimlessly shuffled about, some, in an effort to enjoy their liquid vine in privacy, seeking concealment in the bushes that lined the back of Jim's Grill, just below Bessie Brewer's flophouse, located on the second floor above Jim's Grill.

Betty Spates, an attractive, teenage, African American girl, as well as working at Seabrook Wallpaper Company, worked as a waitress at Jim's Grill, across the street from Seabrook. About an hour earlier, Betty, so she has claimed in the past, had gone over to Jim's

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Richard Sprague, Part II

Hear from the man who was subjected to an incredibly dishonest media attack after he subpoenaed CIA records.

McNamara's Secret

Jim DiEugenio examines the new Vietnam documents and questions just how much Bob McNamara knew, and didn't tell us.

Grill to check on her man. Betty had a secret, considered taboo in those days. She was the mistress of Loyd Jowers, white, owner of Jim's Grill. A good percentage of both the white and black folks didn't cotton to whites and blacks mixing. However, "Mr. Loyd," early forties, was his own man, had connections, was considered, at least in some circles, somewhat of a shaker and mover around Memphis, and Betty was an impressionable and healthy African-American female. Some things just had to be, no matter the insult to the public.

It was around 6 p.m., and Betty had wandered back into the kitchen of Jim's Grill. Strange, Loyd was nowhere in sight. Suddenly—POP! A firecracker? A bomb? As though almost appearing out of thin air, Betty witnessed Jowers, via the back door, which led to the row of bushes at the rear of the grill, come into the kitchen. Loyd, appearing pale, disheveled, and nervous, a rifle in his hand, said to Betty, *You wouldn't do anything to hurt me, would you? I wouldn't want to hurt you.* Betty replied, *Of course I wouldn't, Loyd.*

Immediately, there was chaos everywhere, and it became known that the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. had been shot and was mortally wounded. Before the day was up, the Memphis Police questioned Loyd Jowers and Betty Spates, as well as the other patrons in Jim's Grill that day. The police were searching for a suspect, a white male in a white Mustang. Neither Loyd, Betty, nor any of the patrons present in Jim's Grill at the time of King's shooting had any solid information that would aid the police. The police concluded that no one in Jim's Grill was involved in King's shooting, nor did any of them have anything worthwhile to add to the investigation.

However, time is a great factor in any equation, and over a period of time the equation, for one reason or another, tends to yield a product far removed from the original one. Since that historically fateful day, the theories have abounded: James Earl Ray did it

continued on page 26

In This Issue...

Chairman's Letter	2
The Testimony of Marina Oswald Before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury	3
Jesse Ventura and the JFK Case - Part 2	4
McNamara's Meeting, McNamara's Silence, McNamara's War	6
Mind-Control Part 1: Canadian and U.S. Survivors Seek Justice	10
Interview with Richard Sprague - Part 2	16
Notebook	31

King Case

continued from page 1

alone; Hoover and the FBI did it; the CIA did it; it was a triumvirate involving the U.S. government-U.S. military-Mafia; Ray, having been duped into the role of patsy, was unwittingly led to Memphis by a mysterious Latin smuggler known only as Raoul; Ray did it for reward money offered by two St. Louis-based white supremacists; Jerry Ray, under the code name "Raoul," nonetheless, was the shooter; this one said he would tell what actually happened if granted immunity...

In 1993, a startling revelation entered into the picture: Loyd Jowers came public claiming he was directly involved in the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Jowers, claimed that he, acting on orders from a Memphis crime figure, Frank Liberto, performed the following: handled the money appropriated to kill King; handled the murder rifle; was with the killer when King was killed; and could name King's killer, whom was not Ray, according to Jowers. As expected, the Jowers' revelation drew keen interest from the media world, making headlines almost everywhere. Jowers even appeared (in 1993) on the television show *Prime Time Live*, hosted by Sam Donaldson, and talked about his claimed involvement in King's assassination.

Jowers' claimed role in King's assassination proves perplexing because, even though his statements have been inconsistent, what he has said, and, possibly, has yet to say, cannot be totally dismissed, at least by those with an open mind, who do not always nod "yes" to the words spoken by the politically correct mouthpieces. For the record, Jowers, himself, when he came forward in 1993, was accompanied by a host of rumors: An African-American man named Frank Holt had been hired to kill King... On the day of King's assassination, Jowers had witnessed James Earl Ray, inside Jim's Grill, sit next to and converse with a Latino male (Raoul?)... Jowers denied his relationship with Spates... Jowers admitted his relationship with Spates... Jowers had threatened Spates... A Memphis policeman was the shooter... Jowers was behind Jim's Grill hidden in the bushes with the shooter and took the actual murder rifle from him and hid it in the kitchen of Jim's Grill... Even though Jowers voiced his role to the public, he said the only way he would go under oath and tell what he knew was if he was granted immunity by both the Tennessee and U.S. Attorney Generals. At one point, Attorney Barry Kowalski, appointed by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to head a special Justice Department investigation into

the King assassination, said he would consider immunity for Jowers; however, such never materialized. The Attorney General's Office out of Memphis said they would not consider immunity for Jowers because they felt Jowers' story lacked merit, and he was nothing more than a lying opportunist attempting to make money off a possible book or movie deal.

After Jowers came public, in 1993, with his information about the King assassination, serious attention, too, was placed on Betty Spates. She was grilled heavily by both sides: those who say Ray was the lone gunman; and those who say others were involved and Ray, possibly, was an unwitting patsy. To Attorney William Pepper, James Earl Ray's lead defense counsel for approximately the last ten years of Ray's life, Betty said that she was in Jim's Grill at the time of King's murder, and just seconds after the fatal shot was fired, witnessed Loyd Jowers enter into the kitchen, through a back door that led to the outside and the row of bushes (mentioned earlier), holding a rifle, looking nervous and disheveled.

Investigators for the Memphis Attorney General's Office, which has had prosecutorial control over the Ray-King case, said that when they questioned Betty Spates she told them she wasn't in Jim's Grill at 6 p.m. on April 4, 1968; and that she had made up the story about seeing Jowers, immediately after King was shot, come in through the kitchen door with a rifle in tow, looking all nervous. These investigators further say that Betty admitted to them that she had said all this in hopes of cashing in on the profits from a hopeful movie or book deal. One has to wonder if, possibly, Betty Spates was under a "state of duress" when questioned by these investigators, and when the so-called tape was made. Stranger things have happened.

Some time back, though, after Loyd Jowers came public with his claims, the King Family, with Attorney William Pepper representing them, filed a "wrongful death" civil suit against Jowers. The trial got underway November 15, 1999 at the Shelby County Courthouse, Memphis. Loyd Jowers was defended by Memphis attorney Lewis Garrison, and the King family was represented by, as stated, Attorney Pepper. In an eerie twist of fate, the judge who presided over the case was an African-American gentleman named "James Earl" Swearingen. Look at what some of the witnesses had to say in the "wrongful death" civil trial of Loyd Jowers.

On November 16, 1999, on the witness stand in the Jowers' trial, Coretta Scott King, Reverend King's surviving widow, testified, "It's not about money. That's not the issue. We're [Coretta and her children] concerned

about the truth and the truth coming out in a court of law so it can be documented for all.... If we know the truth, we can be free to go on with our lives." Mrs. King went on to say that her and her family's refusal to accept the prosecution's contention that Ray was the gunman responsible for Reverend King's death had "cost them prestige and funding for their altruistic projects," such as support for the King-family-run King Center. Since taking the stance that Ray didn't kill Reverend King, and broad-mindedly entertaining the possibility of a conspiracy, the King family has been unduly criticized by a good portion of the mainstream media. This is yet another example of how the powers that be spare no measure when attempting to discredit a righteous, yet threatening, foe.

John McFerren, African-American, testified that on the day of King's assassination he was shopping at the Liberto, Liberto, and Latch (LL&L) Produce Company in Memphis. While there, McFerren claimed he overheard Frank Liberto, the company's president, conversing on the telephone, exclaim: "Shoot the son of a bitch when he comes out on the balcony." In his book, *Orders to Kill*, Attorney William Pepper says that he, along with lawyer April Ferguson and stenographer Barbara Rabbito, in February of 1979, traveled to Somerville, Tennessee (about 40 miles outside of Memphis) to pay McFerren a visit. (At the time, McFerren owned a gas station/grocery store in Somerville.) In his book, Pepper said that when they met with him McFerren "seemed increasingly uneasy." McFerren revealed to Pepper that he had been the victim of a "drive-by shooting" and that he, McFerren, had "shot and wounded a man contracted by the Mafia to kill him." Some credence must be given to McFerren's claims, because Pepper also says that "the huge plate glass window in front of his [McFerren's] store was cracked from top to bottom and taped together." Supposedly, this damage was the result of the drive-by shooting. Testimony from Bobbi Balfour/Smith, Betty Spates' half-sister, also a waitress at Jim's Grill, proved interesting. Bobbi said that Jowers, as he usually did, picked up her and another waitress on the day of King's assassination. Of particular interest, Bobbi testified that normally she would take breakfast up to Grace Stephens on a daily basis. However, on the morning of April 4, 1968, Jowers told Bobbi: "I [Bobbi Smith] didn't have to take breakfast up" to Grace Stephens. Smith said Jowers never explained "why." Bobbi claimed she left Jim's Grill before the assassination. According to Bobbi, Jowers later told her the police came through Jim's Grill and found a "gun out in the back." Jowers told her "nothing more," she said.

On the witness stand, Nathan Whitlock, now a musician, testified that he came to know Frank Liberto in 1978-1980, when Liberto patronized "Lavada's," a restaurant owned and operated by Nathan and his mother, Lavada. Nathan said that Liberto told him that "I [Whitlock] reminded him [Liberto] of himself as a young man," and that Liberto liked Nathan's music and, from time to time, would help him get gigs.

As they became closer, Liberto confided in Nathan that he, Liberto, had worked with Mafia don Carlos Marcello, out of New Orleans. (During that time frame, the Marcello family reputedly controlled a large portion of the action being conducted in the South, and Carlos was considered by some authorities to be the strongest boss of all.) Liberto told Nathan that the Mafia "was a bunch of businessmen who take care of business." Taking on a more sinister edge, Nathan testified, Liberto told Nathan's mother, Lavada, that "he'd had Martin Luther King killed," and Nathan felt that "he [Liberto] stepped over the line" when he told Lavada such. However, Nathan was only 18-years-old at the time, and Liberto "was a big man." (Not only in physical stature—around 300 lbs.—but in clout, too, no doubt.) Nathan testified that the following exchange took place between him and Liberto:

WHITLOCK: Did you kill Martin Luther King?

LIBERTO: You wired? I didn't kill the nigger, but I had it done.

WHITLOCK: What about the SOB [James Earl Ray] taking credit for it?

LIBERTO: That troublemaker from Missouri was nothing more than a set-up man.

Nathan closed out his testimony by saying that he raised the issue with the governor (of Tennessee), and was followed by the police, even physically roughed up. I'll come back to Nathan later on in this article.

Of all the testimonies in the Jowers' trial, Judge Joe Brown's, given on November 23, 1999, probably, for some, anyway, carried the most weight. If you recall, Judge Brown presided over the Ray-King case for approximately four years, until he was removed from the case in early 1998. Logically enough, I'm sure (as has been mentioned in the past) the prosecution felt they had it made in the shade when Brown, African-American, a UCLA grad, and civil rights activist, took over the Ray-King case—that Brown would damn Ray all to hell, and that would be the end of it! Then they, the prosecution, could concentrate on important matters, such as DUI's and back child support cases.

From the get-go, Brown, a ballistics enthu-

siast, saw inconsistencies with Ray being the shooter, especially from a ballistics perspective. Brown brought out 4 key points: (1) A metallurgical discrepancy in the slug removed from King's corpse and the whole bullets found, along with the alleged murder rifle and other items, in the bundle, found in front of Canipe's Amusement, next door to Bessie Brewer's flophouse. (2) The 2X7 Redfield Scope mounted atop the alleged murder rifle, a.30-06 Remington 760 Gamemaster, had never been sighted in, and that a shooter could not have hit "the broadside of a barn" with

Valentine said during that time frame there were seven such intelligence groups across America, and the group assigned to the Southeast U.S. was the "111 Military Intelligence Group." He added that the 111 Intelligence Group, in fact, was in Memphis conducting surveillance on King on April 4, 1968. Valentine claimed the 111 Group has "actual film footage of King being assassinated."

the alleged murder rifle. (3) When Brown ordered the alleged murder rifle retested in 1997, 67% of the bullets tested (12 of 18) did not match the alleged murder rifle. (4) The alleged murder rifle "would have blown up" if it had been rested on the window sill of the bathroom of Bessie Brewer's flophouse, as the prosecution contended it had been.. In addition to being set to order another retesting of the alleged murder rifle, Brown, too, it has been rumored, was about to grant James Earl Ray the trial he had been fighting to get since March 1969, a trial Tennessee law (TCA 17-1-305) guaranteed him, yet one the prosecution, judges, and courts ignored and refused—still refuse—to talk about. Can you blame them, though?

Recently, Brown, who—and on his own accord—gave up his judge's seat, and is now star of the syndicated show *Judge Joe*, was a guest on *Fox Television*. On the show, citing that he could say so now, since he'd given up his judgeship, Brown stated that the prosecution knew the alleged murder rifle, in fact, was not the MLK murder rifle.

Pepper brought out a development regarding the dent on the window sill of the commonly-shared bathroom of Bessie Brewer's flophouse, which the prosecution claims Ray made while aiming the fatal shot. Attorney Pepper showed that the prosecution had evidence proving the alleged murder rifle, indeed, did not cause the dent.

The November 29, 1999 proceedings in the wrongful death civil trial of Loyd Jowers proved astounding. Among the witnesses I heard were Bill Hamblin and J.J. Isabel, friends of Jowers, Jerry W. Ray, younger brother of James Earl Ray; Willie B. Richmond, retired from the Memphis Police Department; Douglas Valentine, a writer specializing in U.S. intelligence operations; Carthel Weeden, retired from the Memphis Fire Department; Reverend Walter Fauntroy, ex-HSCA (House Select Committee on Assassinations) member, and Yolanda King, daughter of Martin Luther and Coretta Scott King.

J.J. Isabel testified that Jowers had, over the years, hinted to him of being involved in King's assassination. Isabel said he once asked Jowers: "Loyd," did you drop the hammer on Martin Luther King." Isabel said Jowers, after hearing the question, hesitated a moment or two, then responded with: "You think you know I did it, but I would never admit to it or tell it in a court of law."

Hamblin testified that, over a period of years, he and Jowers had discussed Jowers' role in King's assassination. According to Hamblin, Jowers had confided to him "that an assassin other than Ray gave him the still-smoking gun used to kill King." Hamblin also said that Yellow Cab driver James McCraw, over the years, and usually when intoxicated, had told him that he had directly taken the actual murder weapon from Jowers and thrown it in the Mississippi River, where it possibly still is. (Aside from being a friend of Jowers, McCraw, if you'll recall, years earlier, had given a statement saying that just minutes before King was shot, he came to Bessie Brewer's flophouse to give Charles Stephens, the state's only so-called eyewitness against Ray, a cab ride, but Stephens was too drunk to take anywhere.)

On the stand, Jerry Ray gave an overview of the Ray family existence, how they grew up very poor. He said that when James Earl returned home from the army in 1948 he started living a "life of crime." As he has before, Jerry talked about the last time he saw James Earl before he, James Earl, was picked up at London's Heathrow Airport and charged with King's death. Jerry said it was sometime late August-early September 1967, and Jerry was working at The Sportsman's Country Club in Northbrook, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

continued on page 28

King Case

continued from page 27

Jerry said he received a telephone call from James Earl, and they met in Chicago, spending the night together there. (James Earl had gone to Canada in July 1967.) The next day, Jerry claimed, they had "breakfast together," and James gave Jerry the keys to James' 1962 Plymouth. (An interesting point Jerry made to me in private is that James—during this August-September 1967 meeting in Chicago—appeared to be flush with cash. When James Earl initially had set out for Canada in July 1967 he didn't have very much money on him, says Jerry.) Jerry took James to the Chicago Train Station, and James Earl told Jerry that from that point onward he, James Earl, would contact Jerry using the alias "Eric Starvo Galt." Curious, Jerry asked James what kind of work he would be doing? James told Jerry he was working for a man named "Raoul." Jerry said he knew it was "illegal," whatever it was.

While on the stand, Jerry was shown a transcript of a taped 1977 telephone conversation he had with renown author William Bradford Huie, author of *He Slew the Dreamer*, one of the first books written on the King assassination, damns Ray as King's killer—as did appendages George McMillan and Gerald Posner, later, in their books. In that taped 1977 telephone conversation, Huie told Jerry that if he could persuade James Earl to unequivocally say he killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Ray only signed a guilty plea; he never came out and said, "Yes, I, and I alone, killed Martin Luther King Jr."), then he, Huie, could arrange the following for James Earl Ray: a payment in excess of \$200,000, a pardon from the governor of Tennessee; a waiver of the outstanding warrant from the Missouri Department of Corrections, and a new identity. After silently reading the transcript on the witness stand, Jerry verified it as the taped 1977 telephone conversation he had with William Bradford Huie. On January 1, 2000, via telephone, I spoke with Nashville attorney Jack Kershaw, who was James Earl Ray's attorney in 1976. Kershaw told me that in 1976, in Nashville, Tennessee, he met with William Bradford Huie and two (still unidentified men. Kershaw told me that Huie had made the same offer as the one Huie made to Jerry Ray to take to his client. Kershaw took the Huie offer to Ray, and Ray declined. (See the March-April 1999 issue of *Probe*, "Gerald Posner: Nailed to the Cross", page 5.)

In 1977, *Playboy* magazine interviewed James Earl Ray. During the interview, Ray was given a polygraph test. In its conclusion, *Playboy* reported that Ray failed the polygraph test.

However, on January 1, 2000, Kershaw told me that he had taken the results of Ray's *Playboy* polygraph to one of Nashville's more prominent psychiatrists, and the Nashville psychiatrist told Kershaw that Ray's *Playboy* polygraph had been "boogered," i.e. altered.

On the witness stand, former Memphis Police Department detective Edward Redditt testified that prior to King's assassination his role with the Memphis Police Department was that of community relations officer. It was his "job to get the community to understand police work," he said. However, during the sanitation worker's strike he was pulled from community relations and placed with the intelligence bureau for the purpose of surveillance, to help in identifying anyone who might "disrupt the strike."

When King and his entourage returned to Memphis, Redditt was commanded to assume a surveillance post with Willie B. Richmond, who worked with Memphis Police Department intelligence. Their post was in the locker room at the rear of Fire Station #2, located at the corner of Butler and South Main Streets. Through a peephole in the locker room, they had vantage view of room #306 of the Lorraine, where King, along with Reverend Ralph Abernathy, was lodging.

On April 4, 1968, Redditt and Richmond assumed their surveillance post in the locker room of Fire Station #2. While there, Lt. E.H. Arkin, also of the Memphis Police Department, to whom Redditt was directly reporting, came to the surveillance post and told Redditt that he "was needed at Central Headquarters." Redditt said he and Arkin, having gone to Central Headquarters, "entered a conference room," and there was a "group of law enforcement men" inside the conference room. Also present in the conference room, according to Redditt, was a Secret Service agent who had "just been flown in from Washington, D.C." The Secret Service agent informed Redditt that there was a contract on Redditt's life, and that Redditt was to be pulled from his surveillance post. Redditt objected.

At that point, Frank C. Holloman, then Director of Memphis Police and Fire Departments (also a former FBI agent), ordered Arkin to take Redditt home. "We proceeded to my home, and the radio blasted that Dr. King had been shot. I never heard anything else about the threat [on Redditt's life]." Redditt also noted that he felt Richmond had been placed with him at the surveillance post—at Fire Station #2—to keep an eye on him, because he, Redditt, might have recognized someone he wasn't suppose to.

Under cross-examination, Willie Richmond said that during March-April 1968 he was assigned to "internal affairs." On April 4,

1968, he was placed at Fire Station #2, located at Calhoun and South Main Streets, within easy eye access to room #306 of the Lorraine Hotel and Motel, where King was staying. Richmond's mission was to conduct surveillance on Dr. King and the activities around his room. Richmond said he'd had a surveillance partner, Ed Redditt, but Redditt had been moved from Fire Station #2 because of threat against his life. Richmond went on to say that he observed different people going and coming from King's room, "The Invaders," etc.

Writer Douglas Valentine took the stand and told the courtroom that during 1968 military intelligence conducted "intelligence surveillance" on those who "opposed the Vietnam War." Valentine mentioned "Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin," of *The Chicago 7* fame. Valentine said during that time frame there were seven such intelligence groups across America, and the group assigned to the Southeast U.S. was the "111 Military Intelligence Group." He added that the 111 Intelligence Group, in fact, was in Memphis conducting surveillance on King on April 4, 1968. Valentine claimed the 111 Group has "actual film footage of King being assassinated."

On April 4, 1968, Carthel Weeden was the senior captain at Fire Station #2. On duty that day, Weeden was approached by two U.S. military officers who wanted to observe King, his group, and the activities thereof. The officers said they needed a "vantage point." Weeden said he took the two military types to the roof of Fire Station #2, where they had a vantage point, and left them there. Weeden said that he placed the two military types on the roof of Fire Station #2, where they had an "unobstructed view." After he heard the shot fired, Weeden rushed over to the Lorraine. Eventually, he helped load King's body into the ambulance. Weeden claimed that after he left the two military officers on the roof of Fire Station #2, he never saw them again.

Equally compelling was testimony from Reverend Walter Fauntroy. Fauntroy told the court that he teamed up with Henry Gonzalez to get the HSCA to investigate the Kennedy and King assassinations. He said Richard Sprague was the original prosecutor for the HSCA. "Right off the bat, there was controversy, concerning Sprague," Fauntroy testified. Sprague wished to make all records available to the HSCA, records of the FBI, CIA, etc. This was met with "strong opposition," said Fauntroy. Sprague resigned, and G. Robert Blakey replaced him as HSCA prosecutor. Fauntroy said that all the controversy surrounding the Blakey-for-Sprague swap caused the HSCA to "start about six months late." He mentioned that Blakey would never open up all the files.

This caused suspicion.

Fauntroy also revealed that the HSCA admitted they had never found a "credible witness" to place Ray at the scene of the crime, and he, Fauntroy, was "uncomfortable" about whether or not there was a "Raoul." Under cross-examination, Fauntroy said the most incriminating thing about Ray, according to the HSCA, was that Ray contradicted himself. Fauntroy recalled "cartoon's depicting King as a threat to America." He said that King and Abernathy met with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in an attempt to settle the differences, but to no avail.

Yolanda King pretty much echoed her mother's sentiments. Most poignant was Yolanda sharing with the jurors what it was like to lose her father at 12-years-old, and that she didn't come to grips with his loss "until she was well into her adult life." Outside the courtroom, I spoke with actor-comedian Dick Gregory, co-author with Mark Lane of *Code Name Zorro*, a book about the King assassination. He had this to say: "The murder of Dr. King has the government's handprints all over it."

Together with his father, Attorney Arthur Hanes Sr., now deceased, Arthur Hanes Jr. was the first to serve as defense counsel for James Earl Ray when Ray was extradited from London to Memphis, on July 19, 1968, to stand trial for Dr. King's assassination. On the witness stand, during the Jowers' trial, Hanes Jr. said that Guy Canipe told him the bundle containing the alleged murder rifle was dropped in the doorway of Canipe's Amusement several "minutes before King was shot." The doorway of Canipe's Amusement was located next to a stairwell leading up to Bessie Brewer's flophouse, from where Ray shot King—from a commonly-shared bathroom on the north wing, actually—so claims the prosecution. Had the Hanes father and son team remained as Ray's defense counsel, Canipe's statement regarding the time the bundle was dropped, as opposed to the time King was shot, would have provided earth-moving evidence.

During a court break on November 29, 1999, Jerry Ray and I stood outside the courtroom and conversed with Nathan Whitlock, whose testimony was discussed earlier. As we talked, Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, (newspaper) writer-reporter Marc Perrisquia walked by. Whitlock tore into Perrisquia, lambasting him, calling him "a slanted journalist," adding, "You and I don't talk anymore!" Come to find out, Whitlock's wrath stemmed from an article Perrisquia had written, in the *Commercial Appeal*, a few days earlier. In that article, Perrisquia had made light of the manner of dress Loyd Jowers, financially poor and in poor

health, had worn to court one day. Whitlock told me: "I don't appreciate him, that Gerald Posner yes-man, making fun of Jowers because of the way he dresses." (And what does his attire have to do with whatever he did or didn't do, concerning King's assassination, anyway?) Also, in the next day's *Commercial Appeal*, November 30, 1999 issue, Perrisquia had an article covering the November 29, 1999 proceedings that slanted away from all points made in favor of a possible conspiracy and tilted toward those claiming Ray alone was guilty.

On the witness stand, during the Jowers' trial, Hanes Jr. said that Guy Canipe told him the bundle containing the alleged murder rifle was dropped in the doorway of Canipe's Amusement several "minutes before King was shot."

During the lunch break of the Jowers' trial, Nathan Whitlock, Jerry Ray, and I ventured to the sidewalk outside the courthouse. Lo and behold! While we were talking, even though he wasn't part of the Jowers' civil trial, Assistant District Attorney General John Campbell, who was over the Ray-King case the last few years of Ray's life, came walking up the sidewalk right past us. True to Gerald Posner's flattering description of a man who dressed "stylishly" with "an endless assortment of new shirts and ties" (*Killing the Dream*, page 280), Campbell, sure enough, was decked out. When he reached us, Jerry Ray and Nathan Whitlock attempted to engage him in conversation. Behind wrap-around shades, he produced a bright smile, sorta shuffled in place—cat on a hot tin roof style—and, with what Posner described as his "rapid machine-gun style of talking, " slickly evaded all direct, yet relevant, questions, and vacated the premises with haste.

While in Memphis, covering the trial, the following exchange proved to be the most unsettling for me. As I prepared to leave Memphis and return to my home (4 hours away), I was in the lobby of the Best Western Hotel, where I had lodged while in Memphis for the trial. As though directed by Fate's hand, I was introduced to Louie Ward. Now, Ward proves to be a disturbingly important witness—an oxymoron, of sorts—in the Ray-King case. Ward and I spent a few minutes together, and,

in essence, he revealed the following to me: On April 4, 1968, Ward was a driver for Memphis Yellow Cab taxi service. There was a fellow driver named Paul Butler. On that April 4 day, at approximately 6 p.m., Butler was at the Lorraine Hotel and Motel loading up a fare to transport to the Memphis Airport. As he loaded the fare's luggage into his taxi, King was shot. Butler then called the Yellow Cab dispatcher and relayed what he had just witnessed, and that he was on his way to the airport with his fare. Ward, listening to his radio and hearing what had just transpired, drove to the airport to meet with Butler. Meeting up with Butler, Ward heard Butler tell three Memphis Policemen, who had arrived at the airport in the meantime, what he, Butler, had witnessed just minutes earlier: While at the Lorraine, loading up his cab fare, Butler saw King get shot. Butler then, after calling the dispatch, saw a white man come down over the wall (in the vicinity of the flophouse and the hedges behind it) and get into a police car. To a great degree, this coincides with the claim made by *New York Times* reporter Earl Caldwell, that he, Caldwell, in his room at the Lorraine, upon hearing the shot that slew King, looked toward the row of bushes behind the flophouse and saw a white man rise from a crouched position and move through the bushes.

Butler repeated the story to Memphis Policemen later that evening at the Yellow Cab office. Ward went on to say that Butler, obviously, a crucial witness, set to make an official statement on April 5, 1968, didn't show up for work the next day. His body was found, the day after King was killed, just off the bridge connecting West Memphis and Arkansas. Reputedly, his untimely demise resulted from either willfully jumping from his speeding vehicle, implying suicide, or having been pushed from the same, implying murder. Still more unnerving, today, there are no known death certificates for Paul Butler, either in Tennessee or Arkansas. Further, there is no known obituary in any Tennessee or Arkansas newspaper referring to his death. Still yet, there is no known record of the Memphis Police questioning Butler. It almost appears that there was an effort put forth to make Paul Butler vanish.

There is telephone directory evidence, 1966-1967, that lists a "Betty and Paul Butler." However, 1968 telephone directory evidence lists Betty Butler as being a "widow" of Paul. I asked Ward if Butler had appeared to him to be the type to lose it and do something drastic, such as jump from his speeding vehicle. "No," Ward answered me. "Paul was about as stable as they come. I have no doubt

continued on page 32

King Case

continued from page 29

that Paul, whoever was responsible, was the victim of foul play.”

Media Reaction

After the jury found for the Kings and against Jowers, talking head Gerald Posner (these days, seemingly, an expert on most any subject) was a guest on *The Today Show*. Host Katie Couric was all smiles as Mr. Posner chastised the Jowers’ trial. However, had the jury found that James Earl Ray was the lone assassin responsible, and the King Family, in essence, losing, the wrongful death trial against Jowers, without doubt, would have been declared one of the most brilliantly executed trials in history, a proceeding of paramount legal significance! Too, have you ever noticed that the only guests, for the most part, on these prime time shows are those who damn Ray as King’s killer, beyond doubt, without question? And if they have someone from the other side, Ray possibly not guilty, as portrayed by history, the host tends to take an antagonistic-accusative approach, as opposed to an objective one.

Example. Just a couple months ago, Jerry Ray and I were guests on a Nashville-based television show. Our scheduled opposition was Dwight Lewis, an African-American columnist for a prominent Tennessee newspaper, who has repeatedly accused the Rays, brothers Jerry and John, as well as James Earl, of being involved in King’s death. Lewis, of the same mold as Posner and Parrisquia, wrote an article attacking the Jowers’ trial. However, Lewis conveniently failed to appear against us for the televised debate—on which the Jowers’ trial would have been a key issue—sending in his place a fellow journalist, white. Lewis’s excuse for not showing was that he wasn’t formally invited. I find that hard to ingest and digest, because I know for a fact I E-mailed Lewis an invitation. I’m under the impression the television station contacted him; and one

of his co-workers, whom I believe, without question, said they, Lewis and the co-worker, had discussed the prospect of Lewis appearing on the show. What did Lewis need, a regis-

While at the Lorraine, loading up his cab fare, Butler saw King get shot. Butler then, after calling the dispatch, saw a white man come down over the wall (in the vicinity of the flophouse and the hedges behind it) and get into a police car. To a great degree, this coincides with the claim made by New York Times reporter Earl Caldwell....

tered letter? Possibly, Lewis failed to appear on the show with Jerry Ray and me because, concerning his stance on the King case assassination, and his condemnation of the Rays being involved, he stands not on solid ground, rather on shifting stand. The host of the show did his best to steer the show downstream, thus eating up the clock with meaningless blather, totally removed from the subject at hand: Ray’s guilt/innocence in King’s death. The show lasted one hour and fifteen min-

utes—commercials and call-ins included—and the host allowed the same woman (The host was on a first name basis with her, by the way.) to call in twice—not once, but twice—and engage the white journalist in an accusation-defensive response exchange that up 12 minutes on the clock. I have all this on video. I will concede, however, that the host did an admirable job shifting the flow of the show in favor of the politically correct crowd, saving them from drowning in a sea of facts. Too bad we didn’t meet on neutral grounds, with a neutral host controlling the oars. Concerning the Ray-King case, it appears we have a stacked deck.

Regardless of who was responsible for Dr. King’s death, and for whatever reason King was killed, immediately after King’s death, a large portion of the U.S. population was in a state of emotional upheaval, that emotional upheaval graduating into blinding rage! Rioting was rampant during the days following King’s death. Several areas in the U.S. were hit extremely hard, especially Baltimore and Washington, D.C., rioting reaching to within just a few blocks of our nation’s capital. Many lives were lost, and much property, totaling in the millions of dollars, was destroyed. Black Power advocate Stokely Carmichael urged blacks to “go home and get their guns.” National Guards and regular U.S. Army personnel were placed in many riot-stricken areas. To put it mildly, America was placed on red alert.

Someone had to answer for King’s death—and quickly! James Earl Ray, a white, 40-year-old drifter, career criminal, four-time loser—a “nobody”—fit the profile needed to appease “John Q. Public.” Forcing James Earl Ray into signing a guilty plea stitched America’s wound. To have given him the trial the law said he deserved, TCA 17-1-305, a law invented, voted on, and passed by our legislators and lawmakers, could have reopened the wound and resulted in “mass hemorrhaging.” For those reasons, it was necessary that James Earl Ray remained guilty in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., for as long as he, Ray, remained alive. ♣

PROBE
Magazine. The truth is in here.
Probe is on the Web @
www.webcom.com/ctka
E-mail us at ctka@webcom.com

Please note the expiration date of your subscription on the label below. To renew, send \$30 USA / \$35 Canada / \$

CTKA
PO Box 921688
Sylmar, CA 91392-1688

SEND TO:

MR. JOHN KELIN
894 SOUTH PALISADE CT
LOUISVILLE CO 80027

Last issue will be: 9/22/00

