Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace. (#1 April 4, 2012)

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Let Us Remember King by Making His Dream a Reality

UFPJ [info@unitedforpeace.org]

To: James R. Bennett

Thursday, April 04, 2013 10:46 AM

Dick-

Today marks the 45th anniversary of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., one of history’s greatest champions for peace and justice. Dr. King died working to bring about his vision of a just and peaceful world. Killed in Memphis TN by an assassin’s bullet, King was in the city to support striking Black sanitation workers who received considerably less pay than their White counterparts.

A year earlier to the day, Dr. King delivered his Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence speech at Riverside Church in New York City. Widely known in peace circles, but seldom mentioned elsewhere, he laid out clear moral and pragmatic reasons why he was against the war in Vietnam. He called on our nation to have a “radical revolution of values,” to “shift from a ‘thing-oriented’ society to a ‘person-oriented’ society.” He called on us to confront the evils of hate including racism and bigotry in all its forms, materialism and poverty, and militarism or war.

This was not King’s first time speaking out against the triple evils of hate, poverty and war. In his December 11, 1964 Nobel Peace Prize Lecture, The Quest for Peace and Justice, King explained his thinking on these plagues of humanity. He called war obsolete, because the awesome power of modern weapons, resulting in the killing of so many innocent people, eliminates the possibility that war can play a positive role in solving conflicts. He explained that, “We will not build a peaceful world by following a negative path. It is not enough to say ‘We must not wage war.’ It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it.” He advised us not simply be against war, but, “on the positive affirmation of peace.”

In this 45th year after his death and the 50th year after his most famous I Have A Dream Speech, let us examine King’s full legacy and measure the nation’s progress based on his vision of a just and peaceful world. Certainly we have fallen short. Today hate and poverty are on the rise and the U.S. continues to be the greatest purveyor of violence in the world with gun violence here at home, and as the globe’s number one exporter of weapons, as well as waging the now twelve yearlong global war on terror. Let us not pretend that electing people of color to political office and seeing a few of their faces on television, in movies and in corporate America means that the revolution of values is complete. Let us remember King by challenging ourselves and the nation to dream King’s dream and then struggle to make King’s dream of the Beloved Community a reality. A community where everyone; Black, White, Red, Yellow or Brown feels safe, has an opportunity to prosper and a chance at happiness.
Carl Gibson:  US Government Complicity

Reader Supported News | 03 April 13 PM

It's Live on the HomePage Now:
Reader Supported News

Carl Gibson | How The Government Killed Martin Luther King, Jr.
Before scoffing at this headline, you should know that in 1999, in Memphis, Tennessee, more than three decades after MLK's death, a jury found local, state, and federal government agencies guilty of conspiring to assassinate the Nobel Peace Prize winner and civil rights leader. The same media you would expect to cover such a monumental decision was absent at the trial, because those news organizations were part of that conspiracy. William F. Pepper, who was James Earl Ray's first attorney, called over 70 witnesses to the stand to testify on every aspect of the assassination. The panel, which consisted of an even mix of both black and white jurors, took only an hour of deliberation to find Loyd Jowers and other defendants guilty. If you're skeptical of any factual claims made here, click here for a full transcript, broken into individual sections. Read the testimonies yourself if you don't want to take my word for it.

It really isn't that radical a thing to expect this government to kill someone who threatened their authority and had the power to organize millions to protest it. When MLK was killed on April 4, 1968, he was speaking to sanitation workers in Memphis, who were organizing to fight poverty wages and ruthless working conditions. He was an outspoken critic of the government's war in Vietnam, and his power to organize threatened the moneyed corporate interests who were profiting from the war. At the time of his death, he was gearing up for the Poor People's Campaign, an effort to get people to camp out on the National Mall to demand anti-poverty legislation – essentially the first inception of the Occupy Wall Street movement. The government perceived him as a threat, and had him killed. James Earl Ray was the designated fall guy, and a complicit media, taking its cues from a government in fear of MLK, helped sell the "official" story of the assassination. Here's how they did it.

The Setup

The defendant in the 1999 civil trial, Loyd Jowers, had been a Memphis PD officer in the 1940s. He owned a restaurant called Jim's Grill, a staging ground to orchestrate MLK's assassination underneath the rooming house where the corporate media alleges James Earl Ray shot Dr. King. During the trial, William Pepper, the plaintiff's attorney, played a tape of an incriminating 1998 conversation between Jowers, UN Ambassador Andrew Young, and Dexter King, MLK's son. Young testified that Jowers told them he "wanted to get right with God before he died, wanted to confess it and be free of it."

On the tape, Jowers mentions that those present at the meetings included MPD officer Marrell McCollough, Earl Clark, an MPD lieutenant and known as the department's best marksman, another MPD officer, and two men who were unknown to Jowers but whom he assumed to be representatives of federal agencies. While Dr. King was in Memphis, he was under open or eye-to-eye federal surveillance by the 111th Military Intelligence Group based at Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Georgia. Memphis PD intelligence officer Eli Arkin even admitted to having the group in his own office. During his last visit to Memphis in late March of 1968, MLK was under covert surveillance, meaning his room at the Rivermont was bugged and wired. Even if he went out to the balcony to speak, his words were recorded via relay. William Pepper alleges in his closing argument during King v. Jowers that such covert surveillance was usually done by the Army Security Agency, implying the involvement of at least two federal agencies.

Jowers also gave an interview to Sam Donaldson on "Prime Time Live" in 1993. The transcript of the interview was read during the trial, and it was revealed that Jowers openly talked about being asked by produce warehouse owner Frank Liberto to help with MLK's murder. Liberto had mafia connections, and
sent a courier with $100,000 to Jowers, who owned a local restaurant, with instructions to hold the money at his restaurant.

John McFerren owned a store in Memphis and was making a pickup at Liberto's warehouse at 5:15 p.m. on April 4th, roughly 45 minutes before the assassination. McFerren testified that he overheard Liberto tell someone over the phone, "Shoot the son of a bitch on the balcony." Other witnesses who testified included café owner Lavada Addison, who was friends with Liberto in the 1970s. She recalled him confiding to her that he "had Martin Luther King killed." Addison's son, Nathan Whitlock, also testified. He asked Liberto if he killed MLK, and he responded, "I didn't kill the nigger but I had it done." When Whitlock pressed him about James Earl Ray, Liberto replied, "He wasn't nothing but a troublemaker from Missouri. He was a front man ... a setup man."

The back door of Loyd Jowers' establishment led to a thick crop of bushes across the street from the Lorraine Motel balcony where Dr. King was shot. On the taped confession to Andrew Young and Dexter King, Jowers says after he heard the shot, Lt. Earl Clark, who is now deceased, laid a smoking rifle at the rear of his restaurant. Jowers then disassembled the rifle, wrapped it in a tablecloth and prepared it for disposal.

The corporate media says it was James Earl Ray who shot MLK, and he did it from the 2nd floor bathroom window of the rooming house across the street from the Lorraine Motel. The official account alleges the murder weapon was dropped in a bundle and abandoned at Dan Canipe's storefront just before he made his getaway. But even those authorities and media admit that the bullet that tore through MLK's throat didn't have the same metallurgical composition as the bullets in the rifle left behind by James Earl Ray. And Judge Joe Brown, a weapons expert called to testify by Pepper in the 1999 trial, said the rifle allegedly used by James Earl Ray had a scope that was never sighted in, meaning that the weapon in question would have fired far to the left and far below the target.

The actual murder weapon was disposed of by taxi driver James McCraw, a friend of Jowers. William Hamblin testified in King v. Jowers that McCraw told him this story over a 15-year period whenever he got drunk. McCraw repeatedly told Hamblin that he threw the rifle over the Memphis-Arkansas bridge, meaning that the rifle is at the bottom of the Mississippi river to this day. And according to Hamblin's testimony, Canipe said he saw the bundle dropped in front of his store before the actual shooting occurred.

The Conspiracy

To make Dr. King vulnerable, plans had to be made to remove him from his security detail and anyone sympathetic who could be a witness or interfere with the killing. Two black firefighters, Floyd Newsum and Norvell Wallace, who were working at Fire Station #2 across the street from the Lorraine Motel, were each transferred to different fire stations. Newsum was a civil rights activist and witnessed MLK's last speech to the striking Memphis sanitation workers, "I Have Seen the Mountaintop," before getting the call about his transfer. Newsum testified that he wasn't needed at his new assignment, and that his transfer meant that Fire Station #2 would be out of commission unless someone else was sent there in his stead. Newsum talked about having to make a series of inquiries before finally learning that his reassignment had been ordered by the Memphis Police Department. Wallace testified that to that very day, while the official explanation was a vague death threat, he hadn't once received a satisfactory answer as to why he was suddenly reassigned.

Ed Redditt, a black MPD detective who was assigned to MLK's security detail, was also removed from the scene an hour before the shooting and sent home, and the only reason given was a vague death
threat. Jerry Williams, another black MPD detective, was usually tasked with assembling a security team of black police officers for Dr. King. But he testified that on the night of the assassination, he wasn't assigned to form that team.

There was a Black Panther-inspired group called The Invaders, who were staying at the Lorraine Motel to help MLK organize a planned march with the striking garbage workers. The Invaders were ordered to leave the motel after getting into an argument with members of MLK's entourage. The origins of the argument are unclear, though several sources affirm that The Invaders had been infiltrated by Marrell McCollough of the MPD, who later went on to work for the CIA. And finally, the Tact 10 police escort of several MPD cars that accompanied Dr. King's security detail were pulled back the day before the shooting by Inspector Evans. With all possible obstacles out of the way, MLK was all alone just before the assassination.

The Cover-Up

Around 7 a.m. on April 5, the morning after the shooting, MPD Inspector Sam Evans called Public Works Administrator Maynard Stiles and told him to have a crew destroy the crop of bushes adjacent to the rooming house above Loyd Jowers' restaurant. This is particularly odd coming from a policeman, since the bushes were in a crime scene area, and crime scene areas are normally roped off, not to be disturbed. The official narrative of a sniper in the bathroom at the rooming house was then reinforced, since a sniper firing from an empty clearing would be far more visible than one hidden behind a thick crop of bushes.

Normally, when a major political figure is murdered, all possible witnesses are questioned and asked to make statements. But Memphis PD neglected to conduct even a basic house-to-house investigation. Olivia Catling, a resident of nearby Mulberry Street just a block away from the shooting, testified that she saw a man leave an alley next to the rooming house across from the Lorraine, climb into a Green 1965 Chevrolet, and speed away, burning rubber right in front of several police cars without any interference. There was also no questioning of Captain Weiden, a Memphis firefighter at the fire station closest to the Lorraine, the same one from which Floyd Newsum had been transferred just a day before.

Memphis PD and the FBI also suppressed the statements of Ray Hendricks and William Reed, who said they saw James Earl Ray's white mustang parked in front of Jowers' restaurant, before seeing it again driving away as they crossed another street. Ray's alibi was that he had driven away from the scene to fix a tire, and these two statements that affirmed his alibi were withheld from Ray's guilty plea jury.

The jury present at Ray's guilty plea hearing also wasn't informed about the bullet that killed MLK having different striations and markings than the other bullets kept as evidence, nor that the bullet couldn't be positively matched as coming from the alleged murder weapon. Three days after entering the guilty plea, James Earl Ray unsuccessfully attempted to retract it and demand a trial. Incredibly, James Earl Ray turned down two separate bribes, one of which was recorded by his brother Jerry Ray, where he was offered $220,000 by writer William Bradford Huey and the guarantee of a full pardon if he would just agree to have the story "Why I Killed Martin Luther King" written on his behalf.

The Deception

One of the 70 witnesses that William F. Pepper called to testify in King v. Jowers was Bill Schaap, a practicing attorney with particular experience in military law, with bar credentials in New York, Chicago, and DC. Schaap testified at great length about how the government, through the FBI and the CIA, puts people in key positions on editorial boards at influential papers like the New York Times and Washington Post. He describes that although these editorial board members and news directors at cable news outlets may be liberal in their politics, they always take the government's side in national security-related stories. Before you write that off as conspiracy theory, remember how people like Bill Keller at the New York Times, as well as the Washington Post editorial board, all cheerfully led the march to war in Iraq ten years ago.
Another King v. Jowers witness was Earl Caldwell, a New York Times reporter who was sent to Memphis by an editor named Claude Sitton. Caldwell testified that the orders from his editor were to "nail Dr. King." In the publication's effort to sell the story of James Earl Ray as the murderer, the Times cited an investigation into how Ray got the money for his Mustang, rifle, and the long road trip to Tennessee from California. The Times said that according to their own findings as well as the findings of federal agencies, Ray got the money by robbing a bank in his hometown of Alton, Illinois. In Pepper's closing argument, he says that when he or Jerry Ray talked to the chief of police in Alton, along with the bank president of the branch that was allegedly robbed, neither said they had been approached by the New York Times, or by the FBI. Essentially, the Times fabricated the entire story in order to sell a false narrative that there was no government intervention and that James Earl Ray was a lone wolf.

So for the following 31 years after King's death, nobody dared to question the constant reiteration of James Earl Ray as the murderer of Martin Luther King. Even 13 years after a jury found the government complicit in a conspiracy to murder the civil rights leader, the complicit media continues to propagate the false narrative they sold us three decades ago and vociferously shout down any alternative theories as to what happened as "conspiracy theory," framing those putting forth such theories as wackjobs undeserving of any credibility. It's strikingly similar to how the Washington Post defended their warmongering in a recent editorial commenting on the invasion of Iraq, and had one of their reporters defend the media's leading of the charge into Iraq.

As we remember Dr. King and the important work he did, we should also reject the official account of his death as loudly as the government and media shout down anyone who tries to contradict their lies. As Edward R. Murrow said, "Most truths are so naked that people feel sorry for them and cover them up, at least a little bit."

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**Carl Gibson, 25, is co-founder of US Uncut, a nationwide creative direct-action movement that mobilized tens of thousands of activists against corporate tax avoidance and budget cuts in the months leading up to the Occupy Wall Street movement. Carl and other US Uncut activists are featured in the documentary "We're Not Broke," which premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival. He currently lives in Madison, Wisconsin. You can contact him at carl@rsnorg.org and follow him on twitter at @uncutCG.**

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Here are 3 refs. to the generally accepted explanation of King’s death.

1. [Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Martin_Luther_King,_Jr.)
A speech on the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. was given on April 4, 1968, by New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy (who was himself assassinated two...

Background - Assassination - Responses - FBI Investigation

2. News for Martin Luther King Jr., assassination April 4.

1. The Murder of Martin Luther King Jr.

ABC News (blog) - 10 hours ago

Martin Luther King Jr. was shot and killed by James Earl Ray at the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968.

2. The Assassination Of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

News One - 2 hours ago

3. Martin Luther King Jr. assassination 45 years later: April 4, 1968 in Memphis at the Lorraine Motel

kjrh.com - 5 hours ago

3. Dr. King is assassinated — History.com This Day in History

www.history.com/this-day-in.../dr-king-is-assassinated

Mar 4, 2010

Dr. King is assassinated. Previous Day April 4 Calendar Next Day. Just after 6 p.m. on April 4, 1968, Martin...

4. More videos for Martin Luther King Jr., assassination April 4, »

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