

No evidence of a Ray payoff in King murder—House

Washington—House investigators said Wednesday if James Earl Ray was part of a conspiracy to assassinate Martin Luther King Jr., there is no evidence he received a payoff.

House assassinations committee investigators said a detailed investigation of Ray's finances concluded he may have paid for his escape to Europe after King's assassination with money from a \$27,000 bank robbery.

Chief counsel G. Robert Blakey said the investigation found no evidence of a payoff to Ray in the thousands of dollars.

But Blakey added, "The fact is, a lot of trigger men carry out their contract and never get paid for it."

The committee said it had found significant evidence, but no proof, that Ray and at least one of his brothers robbed a bank in their hometown of Alton, Ill., July 13, 1967, less than a year before King's murder.

The committee spent all day Tuesday in an effort to discredit a claim by Mark Lane, Ray's attorney, that Memphis authorities committed a woman, Grace Walden to a mental hospital to suppress her testimony that Ray was not the assassin.

The committee released records and affidavits from Memphis police saying Mrs. Walden told them shortly after the assassination she had seen nothing.

At the end of the day, Lane, who is now Mrs. Walden's co-guardian, accused the committee of trying to destroy her.

"She is a decent human being whom you have sought to destroy for your own purposes," Lane said from the witness

table. "You, all of you, make me ill." Lane then stalked out of the hearing room.

More wine, please

Washington—Americans are drinking more wine than ever—an average of seven quarts per person per year, a new Agriculture Department survey shows.

The figures for 1976, the latest year for which statistics are available, showed that average wine drinking doubled from the

early 1960s when the consumption was less than four quarts of orange juice and 132 quarts of milk a year on the average.

A soon-to-be-published report on wine drinking based on research by economists Raymond Folwell and John Baritelle shows that California continues to dominate American wine production, accounting for 80 percent of the U.S. wine flow.

The new issue of the department's Farm Index magazine notes several observations from the economists' wide-ranging study, which was based on a scientifically selected sample of 7,000 households around the country.

Among those observations:
—More than 30 percent of the population doesn't drink wine. Most abstainers are in the South.

—Almost four out of 10 non-drinkers said they abstain for religious or personal reasons. But the majority "indicated they didn't know much about wine and therefore were reluctant to try it."

—Regular drinkers with higher incomes, better education and smaller families prefer table and sparkling wines.

—More than half of all wine is purchased at supermarkets, 39 percent at liquor stores and 4 percent at drugstores.

Disabled boy runs

Key Biscayne, Fla.—Timmy limped in and announced to his mother: "They're having a mini-marathon, six and two-tenths miles. I'm going to enter."

Martha Brattain blanched. God had played it down the middle with her Timmy. Eleven years ago he was born with a 50,000-watt glow in his heart—and cerebral palsy.

"Timmy, you can barely run about the block," she said gently. "How can you expect to race more than six miles?"

Timmy grinned and said he didn't know but he was going to try.

She thought he would forget the Key Biscayne mini-marathon. Then, one Sunday last month, he shouted: "Mom, hurry! The race starts in a few minutes."

They barely made it. Seven hundred runners were at the starting line on Key

Biscayne. Timmy took a look at the mob and said, "I better get to the end of the line or they might run over me."

Mrs. Brattain watched the runners start then went back to their home a few blocks away. She was sure Timmy would stop the first time by the house.

So were others who had seen him drag his unsynchronized right leg through soccer and baseball games, grinning, forever grinning, every heaving half-stride.

"I waited in the house," she said, "but he didn't come back in."

Mrs. Brattain bicycled across the island asking if anyone had seen Timmy. They had. "He's still going," they said.

Because of the race, police had shut off traffic into Cape Florida, the state park at the tip of Key Biscayne. Timmy entered Cape Florida more than an hour behind the other runners, who had already threaded their way through and out of the park. Officers saw him and held up motorists. No car would go inside until Timmy came out.

They waited. And waited. Timmy emerged, gasping and flushed, nearly two hours behind the pack. His mother wanted to ride the rest of the way behind him on her bike. But Timmy sent a message: "Tell Mom to stay way behind me."

Out of the park and down the finishing stretch came Timmy. He was half-running, half-hopping, all on his better left leg.

An old man on a lawn hailed Mrs. Brattain: "Was that your kid that just went by?"

She nodded.
"That...is...the...damndest...thing...I...ever...saw," the old man said. The moisture on his cheeks was not sweat.

Jerome White won the mini-marathon in 32 minutes 23 seconds. Timmy crossed the line in two hours six minutes.

His mother tried to be casual. "Are you all right?" she asked.

Timmy grinned. He said he was "a little tired, that's all."

Drug deaths up

Bonn, West Germany—U.S. military commanders expect an increase in the number of drug deaths among American

troops in Europe this year.

Rex Gribble, a press spokesman for the U.S. Army headquarters in Heidelberg, said 25 of the 185,000 GIs stationed in Germany and one dependent had died from drugs by midyear, compared with 26 soldiers and five dependents and civilian employees for all of 1977.

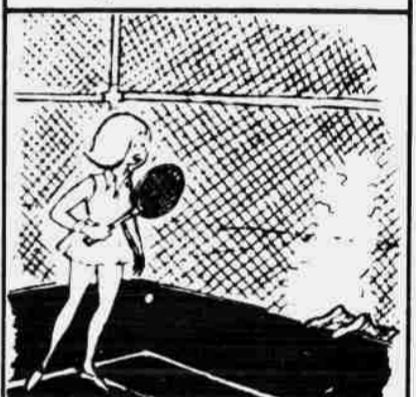
U.S. investigators claim there has been an increase in hard-drug traffic cross the Continent. One investigator said 265 pounds of heroin have been seized in Western Europe this year.

The increase in the drug supply indicates that dealers have developed new sources of supply. Heroin from Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan has found its way in increasing amounts to Berlin, where 5,000 U.S. troops are stationed, sources say.

Despite financial hardships caused by the decline of the dollar, GI addicts manage to pay \$85 for a gram of high-quality heroin, which yields 20 shots.

Forty-five military police investigators have been assigned to drug work full-time. Army headquarters in Heidelberg has requested that 30 more be sent to West Germany.

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