

- See Also:**
- Transcript: William F. Pepper: *An Act of State - The Execution of Martin Luther King*, talk at Modern Times Bookstore, San Francisco, 2/4/03
 - Book Review: The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Was An Act of State, by David Ratcliffe, 1/20/03
 - *An Act of State - The Execution of Martin Luther King*, by William F. Pepper, Verso, January 2003
 - From The King Center:
 - Trial Information including a complete transcript of the trial
 - Trial Transcript - Excerpt of Final Day's Proceedings, 12/8/99
 - Transcription of the King Family Press Conference on the MLK Assassination Trial Verdict, December 9, 1999, Atlanta, GA.
 - The Martin Luther King Conspiracy Exposed in Memphis, by Jim Douglass, Spring 2000
 - The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Was An Act of State, by David T. Ratcliffe, 1/20/03

Dr. William F. Pepper was the King Family's lawyer-investigator for the 1999 trial in Memphis in which the jury found that "YES - Loyd Jowers participated in a conspiracy to do harm to Martin Luther King" and "YES - Others including governmental agencies were parties to this conspiracy as alleged by the defendant." The following is a response by Dr. William F. Pepper to mail from John Judge on New MLK Assassination Suspect, 6 Apr 2002, and is reproduced here with permission of Dr. Pepper.

William F. Pepper on the MLK Conspiracy Trial

7 April 2002

Dear John,

Firstly, allow me to thank you for continuing to provide information of current relevance on this site.

Since I convene the Seminar on International Human Rights at Oxford University I tend to be somewhat out of the loop on a number of emerging US issues and your information is useful, though, obviously, it must be filtered and considered.

In respect of the MLK case it may be useful for you to run thoughts by me since I still represent the family and monitor developments such as the recent allegations, regarding which the family asked me to respond to media queries. So far as we are concerned the truth about the assassination was fully revealed in court, under oath over a month long trial in late 1999 in Memphis. In *Kings v. Jowers, etal*, some 70 witnesses completely set out the details and the range of the conspiracy which was coordinated by the US Government with the assistance of state and local officials and on the site implementation of local organized crime operatives.

The entire trial is on the web site of the King Center. It took the jury about one hour to find the Government liable through the actions of its agents. The identities of the shooter and James Earl Ray's handler, Raul, were also established. I am disappointed, but not surprised that one as knowledgeable as yourself does not seem to be aware of the details of the trial. It was blacked out by all of the mainstream -- network and cable -- media. Court TV promised to cover it live but their team was ordered to stay in the hallway outside of the courtroom and only enter when Mrs King or members of the family took the stand. This was the demeanor of the rest of the press corps as well. My final book on the case is finished and it includes a critical analysis of the AG's investigation and all of the government's publicists over the 34 year history of the case. It will be out within the year.

So, John, it is not true that this case is open. It is open, officially, but unlike the other assassinations we know and have evidence of the details of the killing. The family believes that they are completely vindicated. Even the *New York Times* in a front page piece (never again mentioned, by their local reporter) acknowledged that members of the jury were quoted as saying that the evidence -- never before seen or heard or tested under oath -- was overwhelming.

As for the Wilson allegations, I have spoken with these people since they first contacted me some two years ago. They have never produced any evidence of the involvement in any way of the family member and I regard this story as being no different from the scores of others which I have heard over the 25 years of my involvement in this case.

Your analysis is correct. This type of claim distracts us from the overall coordinating role of Government and the powerful economic interests which decided that MLK had to be removed from the scene because of his increasingly effective opposition to the war and, perhaps, more significantly, his commitment to bring upwards of 500,000 of the wretched of America to Washington, not to march but to encamp and daily visit their elected representatives to demand the restoration of the social welfare/health and educational programs which had been severely, even terminally, cut in deference to the military budgetary increases.

The Army knew that their demands would not be met, realized that the massive assemblage would likely become enraged and emerge as a revolutionary force in the nation's capitol -- the very belly of the beast -- and were fully aware that they did not have the troops available to put down the rebellion. (Remember, at the time, Westmoreland wanted another 200,000 for Vietnam and those were also not available).

Hence, MLK had to be stopped. He would never be allowed to bring that alienated mass to Washington. A logistics officer in charge of troop movements and truck allocations at Fort Meade, passed word to me that on the morning of the assassination he was put on alert and told to be ready to bring the National Guard and other troops to Washington that afternoon. Martin King was shot at 6:01 PM. The troops were already on the move in anticipation of the rioting which was certain to break out when the news reached the capitol.

John, keep up the good work and give my best to all of our friends whose efforts like those of yourself are the ingredients of national treasures. You and the others clearly personify the tradition of critical dissent, tyranny's greatest obstacle, which stretches back through the ages. Once there was Cicero, often a voice in the wilderness crying out *non nobis solum nati sumus* (we exist not for ourselves alone). More than ever today is that spirit needed. I believe that people like yourself, even with the various shades of difference embody that ancient call, which is, by the way, also the motto of my Seminar.

Be well and take care in these especially difficult times. As ever,

Bill Pepper