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Trump Declassifies 240,000 Pages Related to Martin Luther King Jr.'s Death

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In a sweeping release aimed at government transparency, President Donald Trump has declassified more than 240,000 pages of documents linked to the assassination of civil rights icon Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The documents, many of which include Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) surveillance records, were made public through the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) as part of Trump's broader initiative to open long-sealed government files tied to major historical events.

The newly released files contain years of intelligence, memos, and internal correspondence, much of it focusing on the FBI's extensive monitoring of King during the 1960s. The FBI, under the leadership of then-Director J. Edgar Hoover, maintained detailed records on King's personal and professional life, often justified at the time under suspicions of Communist Party ties. Though some of the surveillance tactics have long been criticized as politically motivated, the full scope of the operation and its implications had remained buried in classified archives until now.

This action aligns with Trump's earlier efforts to declassify files related to other major historical assassinations, including those of President John F. Kennedy and Senator Robert F. Kennedy. His stated goal was to give the American people full access to information that has, for decades, been tightly held by intelligence agencies. "Transparency and truth are essential to national healing," Trump previously said during a 2020 campaign event, reaffirming his position that government secrecy too often erodes public trust.

The release has already triggered a wave of renewed scrutiny over past abuses of federal power. Civil liberties advocates and historians alike are combing through the material, looking for evidence of misconduct, overreach, or information that challenges the accepted narrative of King's assassination in 1968. The official account holds that James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty to the killing, acted alone, a position that has long been debated among King's family and supporters.

Notably, many of the files also touch on internal disagreements within the government regarding King's political influence, including concerns over his opposition to the Vietnam War and his growing influence among working-class Americans. Several reports hint at discussions among intelligence agencies about how to contain or discredit King's activism, a strategy that some believe laid the groundwork for future government overreach.

While the Biden administration has not publicly commented on the release, Trump's move to unseal these records is being hailed by transparency advocates as a meaningful step toward historical accountability. It also reinforces broader calls for declassification in other controversial areas, where government narratives have long been questioned.

The declassified records are now accessible through the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), which has begun the process of organizing and digitizing the full collection for public review. As researchers dig deeper into the documents, further

revelations about the government's conduct during one of the most turbulent periods in American history are expected to emerge.