

King rifle to get more testing

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Plans for new tests on the rifle believed used to kill Martin Luther King Jr. remained on schedule Monday.

Ballistics experts selected by confessed killer James Earl Ray's lawyers will fire the rifle and compare test bullets with the death slug at the Rhode Island state crime lab in South Kingstown, R.I., through Friday.

The bullets then will be compared at a private lab, CamScan USA Inc. in Cranberry Township, Pa., on May 21-23. That lab is equipped with a scanning electron microscope, thousands of times more powerful than conventional microscopes.

Judge Joe Brown of

Tennessee Criminal Court



King

ordered the testing to try to determine once and for all if Ray's rifle was the one that killed King.

Tests by the FBI at the time of the killing and later by the U.S. House Select Committee on Assassinations failed to prove beyond a doubt that the rifle was the murder weapon, though King was shot with the same kind of gun.

Evidence gathered by the House committee, which concluded Ray was the killer, is under seal until the year 2029.

Prosecutor John Campbell

said at a brief hearing before Brown that the state is considering a request for permission to reexamine the test bullets fired for the committee.

"If you can get them, feel free to run an analysis," Brown said as he wrapped up details for the testing.

Campbell said the state will likely forego its own testing, however, unless Ray's lawyers say they can positively exclude the rifle as the murder weapon.

Ray, 69, requested testing as part of his decades-old efforts to take back his guilty plea and go to trial. He contends the rifle was dropped near the murder scene to frame him.

King's family has come out in favor of such a trial for Ray, saying it might answer lingering suspicions that King was the victim of a conspiracy.

Mobutu stashed billions in '80s

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON — Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko, embattled leader in one of the world's poorest nations, accumulated a fortune that reached \$4 billion in the mid-1980s, The Financial Times newspaper reported Monday.

Despite a warning from a senior International Monetary Fund official that Zaire was "endemically corrupt," the IMF supported loans to Zaire totaling \$3.9 billion between 1982 and 1991, the newspaper said.

It quoted IMF reports which detailed the widespread plunder of Zaire's natural resources by Mobutu, which included ordering Zaire's copper and cobalt mining company, Gecamines, to deposit its 1978 export earnings into a presidential account.

An IMF spokesman had no comment on the story.

"As far as IMF lending to Zaire is concerned, it was provided on the same lines as to all member countries to finance balance of payments deficits," the spokesman said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mobutu's finances, as well as his hold on power were weakened by the collapse in 1978 of

the price of copper — a key Zairian export and having to pay members of his patronage circle in U.S. dollars rather than the Zairian currency.

Recently, he was forced to pay Bosnian mercenaries several million dollars to fight against rebel forces.

But his the minimum worth of his known properties is still around dfrs 37 million, the Financial Times said.

Mobutu's current property empire centers around significant investments in Europe, including nine properties in and around Brussels, Belgium, as well as properties in France, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland, the newspaper said. He also holds property in Africa and South America.

The newspaper said the dictator, 66, who is suffering from cancer, also has large stock holdings in German and Swiss companies and reserves of "liquid cash." Some of his wealth is held in the names of relatives, it said.

After 32 years, Mobutu's regime is on the brink of collapse. In seven months, rebels led by Laurent Kabila have overrun three-quarters of the central African nation, which is rich in copper, cobalt, diamond and timber, and claim

to be within 30 miles of Zaire's capital, Kinshasa.

The Financial Times said that in the 1960s, Western governments were keen to coopt Mobutu as an ally against Soviet expansion in central Africa, turning a blind eye to the growing corruption in his regime.

"In the first few years Mobutu received millions of dollars from the CIA," the newspaper quoted John Stockwell, a former CIA chief in Zaire, as saying, adding that "\$20-25 million of CIA and U.S. government aid money could well have gone through Mobutu's hands."

Mobutu continued to receive large amounts of foreign aid in part, the newspaper said, because of the civil war and subsequent build-up of Cuban troops in neighboring Angola.

Mobutu also pocketed money from the CIA intended for pro-western UNITA guerrillas fighting Cuban forces in Angola.

"When Angola was coming under Cuban influence, Zaire was considered a fortress that could be trusted. The policy of the West, led by the U.S., was to help Mobutu as much as possible," the newspaper quoted Leo Tindemans, former Belgium prime minister, as saying.

Bishop blasts Gadhafi visit

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAGOS, Nigeria — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's visit to Nigeria last week promoted religious persecution, a Roman Catholic archbishop contends.

Olubunmi Okogie, the archbishop of Lagos, accused Gadhafi of encouraging "jihad," or holy war, against Christians by telling Nigerians that "Muslims all over the world should reject all things that were not

Islamic." Such statements "could threaten the peaceful coexistence of all religions in Nigeria," Okogie said.

The west African nation's population of 100 million includes Christian and Muslim minorities.

In a jab at Nigeria's autocratic Muslim leader, Gen. Sani Abacha, Okogie said that permitting Gadhafi to arrive in Nigeria with 700 bodyguards was a provocation.

"I want to ask our leaders that if other African leaders come to Nigeria, will they be allowed such an unusual privilege?" Okogie said.

Nigeria has formed new alliances since Western nations imposed sanctions for its execution of human rights activists in 1995.

Gadhafi's flight to the Nigerian city of Abuja on Friday violated a United Nations ban on flights out of

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Ebonics jab touches a nerve

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ITHACA, New York — Angry students accused the Cornell University newspaper staff of racism after it published an "ebonics" course description that said whites are "tryin to keep da brotherman down."

Editors of the biweekly Cornell Review said the unsigned article that appeared on the humor page in the April 17 issue was a parody.

The article offered what it called an ebonics, or black English, translation of Cornell's course descriptions for "The Africana Major." For "Racism in American Society," it offered this: "Da white man be evil an he tryin to keep da brotherman down."

Following publication, outraged students at the Ivy League school in central New

York burned 200 copies of the paper at a rally.

The editors were surprised. "It didn't stick out, even to me," said Michael Capel, chairman of the Review and a graduate student in public affairs.

"In retrospect, I can see that it might have been offensive to some people. But I don't think it's particularly out of the ordinary."

University President Hunter Rawlings, however, said the article was in poor taste and denounced the newspaper.

"Race-baiting, stereotyping and intentionally degrading attacks on Cornell's African-American community have no place in our campus discourse," Rawlings said Tuesday.

Some students asked the school to end the paper's funding and shut it down, but

Capel said the university instead may consider a speech code and a mandatory racism sensitivity course for incoming freshmen.

That was denied Wednesday by a Cornell spokeswoman. Linda Grace-Kobas said the university has no plans for a speech code and the racism sensitivity course was a proposal put forth by students.

Ebonics, formed from the words "ebony" and "phonics," hit the headlines last December when an Oakland, California, school board suggested that black English was a "genetically based" separate language.

The board has dropped the suggestion. While school officials insisted they were just trying to help black students learn English, critics denounced the resolution as legitimizing slang and underestimating black students.

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