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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Judge seals King tapes for 50 years

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A federal judge has ordered all the FBI's tapes of its surveillance of Martin Luther King Jr. sealed in the National Archives for 50 years.

U.S. District Judge John Lewis Smith issued the order Monday after hearing a damage suit against the FBI by Bernard Lee, a former assistant to the slain civil rights leader, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Smith refused to order the tapes destroyed, as Lee asked. But gave the FBI 90 days to give the archives all copies of the tapes and transcripts of its bugs and wiretaps of King and the SCLC offices between 1963 and 1968.

Lee also asked for damages but Smith ruled this was barred by a three-year statute of limitations which began to run at the time Lee and the SCLC first knew about the surveillance.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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