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54/08/19 Offer to Confess Murder for Cash

Cleveland Press

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Offer to Confess Murder for Cash

By **BILL TANNER**

Offers to confess—for a price—have been received by the family of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard since his wife, Marilyn, was murdered in her bed on July 4.

All members of the family have received telephone calls and letters from "cranks" and people "who seem to be sincere," according to Dr. Richard N. Sheppard, oldest of the three osteopath sons in the Sheppard family.

"One man wrote to me twice," Dr. Richard said today, "each time asking for \$100,000 in cash in return for his confession to the murder."

Dr. Richard said he has received four letters and his brothers and parents have received others. He said he turned his over to the police or to the family attorneys.

The last letter he received, Dr. Richard said, came early this week.

It was pencil-written in long hand and the language sounded like that of a well-educated person, he said.

The letter writer said he "expected to get the death penalty," but was making the offer in exchange for \$25,000, "to go to the support of my family."

Another letter, penciled in large capital letters, identified the writer as a man who "knows how to get only one to 20 years" for the murder. He, too, wanted \$25,000.

Each of the letter writers said he had read all the papers and therefore "know all the answers" and "couldn't be tripped up by detectives." All the letters were postmarked in Cleveland.

Phone calls from unknown "friends" and others have tapered off recently, Dr. Richard said, but bothered the family considerably soon after the crime.

"Some people called to say they were praying for Sam while others were just abusive," Dr. Richard said. He kept his phone in service while his brother, Dr. Stephen, changed his to an unlisted number.