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Investigators for House Uncertain Whether Ray Got Outside Help

WASHINGTON, June 13 (AP)—Investigators for the House assassinations committee said today that they did not know if James Earl Ray had received outside help in his prison escape over the weekend.

They reported that Mr. Ray's brother, Jerry, visited the prisoner the weekend before the escape but that James Earl Ray apparently had no money or weapons on his person when he was captured today.

The committee chairman, Representative Louis Stokes, Democrat of Ohio, said Gov. Ray Blanton of Tennessee had told him that a full investigation would be made of prison security, particularly whether "there was any laxity in the security" for Mr. Ray.

The Possibilities

Two committee investigators went to Brushy Mountain State Prison on Saturday because of the committee's interest in the convicted killer of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I cannot report to you whether there was any aid from the outside," Robert Lehner, deputy chief counsel of the King assassination investigation, told the panel. "No evidence of aid from the outside has been found."

"One possibility is that he acted alone,"

he said. "Another possibility is that there was outside help. There is even a possibility he was a latecomer to the escape."

The chief investigator for the committee's King assassination inquiry, Edward Evans, told the committee that Mr. Ray's brother visited the prisoner the weekend before the escape. But he said, "There is no evidence he [James Earl Ray] had any funds or arms."

Mr. Evans said the investigators had tried to find out if there was any previous association between Mr. Ray and the other escapers. He said they found none except that one was his cellmate at the prison.

Mr. Stokes told reporters later that he believed Mr. Ray was more likely to cooperate with the committee because he knew he could not escape from prison and had hopes "of eventually obtaining his release."

The chairman suggested that his investigators planned no separate investigation of the escape but would include anything relevant about it in the investigation they already have going into the King assassination.

"And this would include assurance that no outside sources are trying to hurt him," Mr. Stokes said.