James Earl Ray's Brother Sought in Robbery

John Larry Ray

QUINCY, Ill. (AP) — John Larry Ray, the 47-year-old brother of James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has been missing from federal custody since February, authorities have revealed.

An announcement from the FBI, the first public word of Ray's escape, came as authorities here issued a warrant charging Ray in the $15,000 robbery of the Farmers' Bank of Liberty on May 30.

An FBI spokesman in Springfield said Ray, considered armed and dangerous, may be headed for the St. Louis area.

According to the spokesman, Ray fled federal custody in February while being taken from the federal prison near Marion, Ill., to a prison hospital at Springfield, Mo.

St. Louis police said their first word about Ray's escape came in a teletype notice from Illinois authorities yesterday about the robbery 115 miles northwest of St. Louis.

Adams County authorities said Ray was linked to the bank robbery after a Liberty police officer spotted a suspicious car on a nearby country road and chased it on June 4.

The driver escaped on foot, but Ray's fingerprints were found in the recovered car, which also contained a license application made out in a known alias of Ray's, James LaRue, with a Quincy address, officials said. A bag containing $11,000, thrown from the car during the chase, was also recovered, authorities told the newspaper.

Ray was once questioned by the House Assassination Committee in connection with the death of King.

James Earl Ray is in Tennessee's Brushy Mountain State Prison.

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