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Ray Brother Will Be Asked About Jordan Shooting

QUINCY, Ill. (UPI) — The FBI wants to question the brother of the assassin of Martin Luther King Jr. about the shooting of black civil rights leader Vernon Jordan.

FBI agents said Tuesday John Larry Ray is not a suspect in the wounding of Jordan, president of the National Urban League, outside a Fort Wayne, Ind., motel last month. But the agents said there were similarities between the Jordan case and the King assassination.

James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to the assassination of King and is serving a 99-year sentence in a Tennessee prison.

His brother, John Ray, was arrested Monday on a bank robbery charge.

Wayne Davis, FBI agent in charge of the Jordan investigation, said Tuesday in Indianapolis the FBI wants to know where John Ray was when Jordan was shot.

"This isn't a major turn in the investigation," Davis said. "The only thing we're interested in is his whereabouts. There's no indication that he is a suspect. What we want to know is where he's been and about his travels while he was away from his place of incarceration."

Ray, who told reporters Monday he suffers from memory lapses, expressed uncertainty about his own whereabouts when Jordan was shot. He said he also did not know if he committed the robbery in which he is a suspect.

"I don't think I did (shoot Jordan)," he said. "I have not shot anybody as far as I know."

Ray was being sought as a federal fugitive at the time Jordan was shot.

FBI officials said both King and Jordan apparently were stalked by their assailants and the King assassination apparently was financed by bank robberies.

Ray was arrested while walking on a highway near Alton, Ill., by sheriff's Deputy Conrad "Pete" Baetz, who was involved in a congressional investigation of the King slaying.

"There is nothing to indicate John Larry Ray is involved," Baetz said. "However, the possibility should not be ignored.

"The possibility that John Larry Ray was involved in the King assassination with his brother has not been eliminated, and the circumstances with Jordan are almost identical.

"A 30.06 rifle was used. Jordan was shot in front of his motel. The reports on Jordan sound like the first reports on King. I would never ignore the possibility, but there is nothing to indicate a probability."