CA JUNE 25/80 Commercial-Appeal

Agents To Question Kin Of Convict Ray In Jordan Shooting

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. (UPI) — The FBI said Tuesday agents plan to question John Larry Ray, brother of convicted assassin James Earl Ray, about last month's shooting of National Urban League leader Vernon Jordan.

John Ray, whose brother pleaded guilty to the murder of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., was arrested Monday near Alton on a warrant charging him with bank robbery. He was held in the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch said in a copyright story the FBI does not consider Ray a suspect in the Jordan shooting but "there are some similarities in the shootings of the two civil rights leaders that warrant the questioning of John Larry Ray."

The newspaper said FBI Director William H. Webster said both King and Jordan apparently were stalked by their assailants and that the King assassination apparently was financed by bank robberies.

John Ray, charged in a $15,000 bank robbery May 30 a Liberty, Ill., was arrested as he walked along Illinois 140 eas of Alton. He was spotted by sheriff's deputy Conrad 'Pete Baetz, who recognized Ray.

Baetz became acquainted with John Ray while involvec in a congressional investigation of the King assassination.

Ray also had been sought as a federal fugitive for failing to report to a St. Louis halfway house after his release from the federal penitentiary at Marion, where he had served time for driving the getaway car in a 1970 bank robbery in St. Peters, Mo.

Baetz, who was off duty and on a shopping trip with his wife, saw Ray walking along the highway and arrested him.

Baetz said he believes John Ray should be questioned in the Jordan shooting.

"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."