Ray's brother 'doesn't think'

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John Larry Ray, whom FBI agents plan to question in connection with last month's shooting of civil rights leader Vernon E. Jordan Jr. in Fort Wayne, Ind., told The Globe-Democrat he does not think he shot Jordan or anybody else.

Ray is the brother of convicted assassin James Earl Ray.

In an exclusive interview in the Madison County, Ill., Jail waiting room Monday night, shortly after Ray's capture near Alton, a Globe-Democrat reporter asked Ray if he had shot Jordan.

"I DON'T THINK I did," Ray responded. "I have not shot anybody as far as I know.

"I don't think I did anything like that," Ray added later in the interview. "I never shot anybody in my life."

FBI officials in Washington and Indianapolis said Ray is not a suspect in Jordan's shooting, but that he is one of many people they will question in connection with the incident.

Ray has been a federal fugitive since he did not show up at a St. Louis halfway house after being released from a federal mental facility in Springfield, Mo., in February.

He was serving part of an 18-year sentence he received in 1970 for the robbery of a St. Peters bank.

HE HAS ALSO been charged with the bank robbery of the Farmer's Bank of Liberty, Ill., May 30.

Following a hearing before Madison County Circuit Judge Victor J. Mosele Tuesday, Ray was transferred via airplane from the Madison County Jail at Edwardsville to the Adams County Jail at Quincy, Ill. He was held in Quincy in lieu of $200,000 bond, pending a court appearance Wednesday on the bank robbery charge.

Wayne G. Davis, special agent in charge of the Indianapolis FBI office, said Ray will be questioned in connection with the shooting, although he is not considered a suspect.

"JAMES EARL RAY financed his activities surrounding the shooting of Martin Luther King with the proceeds of a bank robbery. John Larry Ray

he shot Jordan

allegedly has been involved in a bank robbery (at Liberty, Ill.). Beyond that, we're not making any comment.

"We have no reason to think he is responsible," Davis added. "At this stage of the game, we're just continuing the investigation. We don't have any information that would show that there's anything promising," he said.

Ray said he suffers from periodic memory lapses, and that he does not remember why he failed to appear at the St. Louis halfway house. He also told The Globe-Democrat that he did not know whether he committed the Liberty bank robbery.

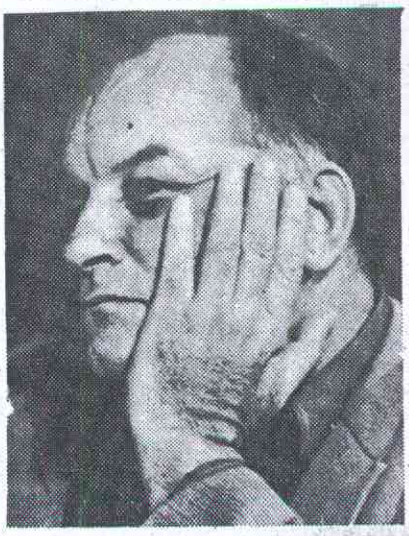
"I ACTUALLY don't know what happened," Ray said. "I can't say whether I did that."

Ray was arrested about 5:45 p.m. Monday, as he walked along Illinois 140, in a chance encounter with a Madison County sheriff's deputy.

Sgt. Conrad "Pete" Baetz, who once served as an investigator for the U.S. House subcommittee that investigated the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was off duty and driving along the highway with his wife when he saw a pedestrian he believed to be Ray.

Baetz called for assistance, and when Deputy Tom Bearce arrived, Baetz helped make the arrest.

Ray, wearing an orange leisure suit and armed with a .38-caliber revolver in a shopping bag, did not resist arrest, according to Madison County authorities.



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