

# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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Jerry Ray  
James "wanted to be cleared"

## Brother 'Goes Public' With *What Ray Told*

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James Earl Ray and his brothers have decided to "go public" with the story of how they say Ray was drawn into the events surrounding the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968.

Jerry Ray, 42 years old, of Long Grove, Ill., told the Post-Dispatch yesterday that he and another brother, John Larry Ray, now an inmate at the Marion, Ill., Federal Penitentiary, had decided Sunday to reveal to the Post-Dispatch what James Earl Ray has told the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations. A spokesman for the committee yes-

terday refused any comment on the case.

A number of the assertions have never been made public before, including the contention that James Earl Ray possesses the telephone numbers in New Orleans that were his link to a mysterious figure called "Raoul."

But some of the information supplied the Post-Dispatch by Jerry Ray is diametrically opposed to previous statements attributed to him on the subject of James Earl Ray's involvement in the Rev. Dr. King's murder.

Jerry Ray was previously quoted as saying that "Raoul" was "just a story Jimmy made up for (William Bradford) Huie," James Earl Ray's biographer. And Jerry Ray has previously been quoted as saying,



## h Details

# ld Assassinations Panel

"The whole thing about Raoul and running drugs from Canada was a lie."

The quotations are contained in a new book on the King assassination written by George McMillan. Excerpts from the book "The Making of an Assassin," appeared in the Post-Dispatch earlier this month. Jerry Ray filed suit in January against McMillan, charging him with libel in the book.

Raoul and James Earl Ray's involvement in complicated smuggling operations are central parts of the story Jerry Ray told the Post-Dispatch yesterday.

Raoul's involvement in the events surrounding the Rev. Dr. King's murder first was alleged in letters Ray wrote to Huie while Ray was in jail in Memphis. Raoul's identity

and indeed, his very existence, have been debated for more than eight years.

Ray has maintained that he bought the gun that killed the Rev. Dr. King and rented the room from which the fatal shot was fired at Raoul's direction. The phone numbers purportedly linking James Earl Ray to Raoul have been copied by Jerry Ray and are in two safety deposit boxes belonging to Jerry Ray and his sister, a St. Louis resident, Jerry Ray now says.

"He (James) gave us the numbers and said even if something happened to him in prison, he wanted to be cleared someday," Jerry said.

James Earl Ray, according to his brother, said that the day of the Rev. Dr. King's killing he discovered a business card stuffed into the

seat of the white Mustang in which he fled from Memphis, an automobile to which three people including Ray and Raoul had keys. The business card bore the penciled name of one Randy R (the last name is known to the House panel) who, says Jerry Ray, has dropped out of sight. James Earl Ray's attorneys have been unable to track him down without the power of subpoena.

They have met a similar deadend in trying to trace two telephone numbers that Ray says he used to reach Raoul in New Orleans.

James Earl Ray, says Jerry Ray, was involved with Raoul in delivering cars to cities in various parts of

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# Ray

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the United States and Mexico "at \$1000 to \$2000 per trip." Said Jerry Ray: "James assumed he was delivering dope or some other kind of contraband."

"James is a crook," said Jerry Ray. "He's been one since he got out of the Army, to make money without working. He thinks being a thief is an honorable profession, but he never wanted to be known as a murderer."

Now, says the brother of the man convicted of assassinating the Rev. Dr. King, James Earl Ray fears that if he is transferred to federal custody after his short-lived escape from a Tennessee state prison recently, he will be sent to the federal medical facility at Springfield (Mo.), given shock treatments, die of a heart attack in three years, and the case will be closed.

Here is the story Jerry Ray told the Post-Dispatch of how James Earl Ray found himself in Memphis at the time the Rev. Dr. King was killed:

"After he escaped from the Missouri Penitentiary in 1967, he came to Chicago and called me," said Jerry Ray. "He later told me he didn't escape in a bread truck as the story goes. He climbed over the wall on some pipes, like he did in Tennessee."

"When they found he was missing, they thought he was hiding inside the prison as he had done on a previous attempt. This gave him some valuable time to walk along the railroad tracks and get away. They put out the bread truck story because James was working in the bakery and they just figured that was what happened."

"I met him in Chicago when he got there. He never once mentioned King or any other political matters. James doesn't give a damn about politics. He never cared who was governor or who was running the country. If you're a racist in prison, where he was, you're in deep trouble. These stories that he carried around pictures of Hitler and stuff, that's a lot of bunk. He's not violent. When he was arrested on an armed-robbery charge in St. Louis in 1959, he had a gun but didn't use it. Even the black prisoners in Tennessee think he was framed."

When Ray arrived in Chicago, said his brother, "he took a job as a dishwasher at a restaurant in Winnetka. After a couple of days he was promoted to the cafeteria line. He worked there six weeks until he got enough money to get out of the country, because he was 'hot.'"

"He went to Montreal and started hanging around some sleazy bars and let it be known that he was a thief and was looking for a way to make some money. That's where he met Raoul."

"He knew Raoul was a phony name but he was using one, too. He used last names like Willard, Lohmyer, Eric Galt and finally Sneyd. If you're a crook, you don't ask, 'What's your name' or, 'what's in the car?' They'll think you're a cop or a stool pigeon and they wouldn't hire you."

"After a while, James came back to Chicago and I could tell he had something good. He asked me to come to Chicago by train because he wanted to give me his car. He said I should get new license plates because the old ones were hot. He said he was going to take a bus to Alabama for 'a good job.' He said Raoul told him to establish residence in Birmingham and gave him \$2000 to buy a car. He bought a Mustang."

"Raoul operated out of New Orleans. From there he started sending James out across the country and into Mexico to deliver cars. All over — Puerto Villarta, Acapulco, the West Coast, New Orleans. He was getting paid \$1000 or \$2000 a trip. He figured the cars might be full of dope but he didn't ask any questions. All he cared about was that he had a job and was getting paid good. It was better than being in Jeff City, he told me. James told me Raoul never talked politics, either."

James Earl Ray has said that a gun he purchased was probably the one used to kill Dr. King. This is his brother's explanation:

"James tells me that one day Raoul asked him to buy a gun in Alabama and bring it to Memphis. At this point James thought Raoul might also be in the gun-running business. He brought the gun to Raoul. He said it wasn't the right kind. So James went back and bought another one. Raoul said that was the right kind. He picked it up from James at the new

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Rebel Motel just across the Mississippi line from Memphis.

"Then Raoul told James to move into a boarding house in Memphis. In this job James was always doing what he was told. The money was good. James had only been to Memphis once before in his life. He kept getting lost there. He rented the room in the name of Willard."

"Raoul came to the boardinghouse and sent James out on several other errands — to buy some binoculars and other things. The afternoon Dr. King was shot, Raoul told James he wanted to use the Mustang that night."

"There were three keys to it. James had one, Raoul had one, and he (James) didn't know who had the third one. James told him he would have to go get a tire fixed because he had had a flat tire."

"He drove to a service station nearby and they were busy. He talked to two attendants for awhile. When he was driving away he saw all this commotion, police cars everywhere. He heard on the radio that Dr. King had been killed. When he heard they were looking for a white Mustang, he realized he had been set up."

In the Mustang, James Ray discovered a card stuffed into the seat, says Jerry Ray. The front part was crossed out. The back bore a name, Randy R—, with a telephone number on it.



"Only James and my sister and myself have known this name up to now," said Jerry Ray. "Plus the Assassinations Committee. James kept this card."

It was discovered by attorneys for James Earl Ray that Randy R— had homes in Miami and Gulfport, Miss., and that he was subsequently apprehended in New Orleans and convicted on a dope charge, says Jerry Ray. "But whether he ever served any time or not, we can't find out, and after that he dropped out of sight. He is said to have been an informant for the FBI," Jerry Ray said.

James Earl Ray drove to Atlanta, abandoned the Mustang, and took a train to Montreal. "He knew he was hot. The only way to get out of the country is through Canada. He didn't know how to get a passport so he went to the public library and looked up the names of people born around the same time he was.

"One was named Ramon George Sneyd. James found him in the phone book, called him up, said he was from Immigration, and asked if he had ever had a passport. When the man said, 'No,' James took out a passport in his name. He still had plenty of money from driving cars across country for Raoul. He flew to England.

"From there he went to Portugal, but he couldn't speak the language and he was beginning to run out of money. He wanted to get a ship somewhere to a place like Rhodesia. But he had to wait. Now he was down to \$200. He has told me if he had still had his contacts, he would still be going.

"But meantime the U.S. had asked Mexico and Canada to check passports for somebody that looked like James Earl Ray. They had a picture of him. Canada said they had one named Sneyd that looked like James. When James flew back to London, they arrested him.

While Ray was on the run, things were happening in Memphis. In the boarding house from which the fatal shot was fired, a woman resident saw the fleeing killer. Her name, said Jerry Ray, is Grace Walden. She was shown a picture of James Earl Ray, he said, and declared that it was not the man. Grace said the man who ran had fair hair, not dark hair like James. James Earl Ray has described Raoul as a blond Latin.

Says Jerry Ray: "They took her and

put her in a nuthouse where no one could find her. In case she was ever called to testify, they could say she was mentally ill."

A spokesman for attorney Mark Lane, who has recently written a book about the Ray case, told the Post-Dispatch yesterday that the woman, under the name Grace Stephens, was committed to a mental institution in Tennessee in 1968 "under suspicious circumstances" and was still confined. Her attorney, C. M. Murphy of Memphis, has charged that she is "being sedated and her mind is being destroyed," according to Lane's spokesman.

"She was living in the rooming house with a guy named Charlie Stephens," Jerry Ray told the Post-Dispatch. "This is a flophouse and he was a liquor head. He was supposed to see the killer running down the steps. This is their other witness. The facts we have found out are that a half-hour before Dr. King was killed, this man called a cab to take him to the liquor store. He was so drunk the cabbie refused to take him. This is the key witness."

When the killer ran out, says Jerry Ray, he placed a bundle in a park near the rooming house. "He didn't put it in a trash barrel or in his car. It contained the gun, some beer cans, and the binoculars wrapped in a bed spread. They all had James's fingerprints on them.

"Well, James doesn't drink beer. He doesn't smoke either. They found cigarette butts in the ashtray of his Mustang. They found clothes in the car that didn't fit him. This is the car Raoul and somebody else had keys to."

Said Jerry Ray: "When James was apprehended in London, he wanted Arthur Hanes, a former major of Birmingham, Ala., to represent him. Hanes went there and said it would cost money, but he brought contracts with him for a book to be done by William Bradford Huie, and if James would sign the contracts, the proceeds would pay for his defense.

"James signed them, then had me fly to Huntsville, Ala., to meet Huie. Huie told me that if James told him his story, he didn't want to get called to the stand, because he would have to tell the story and it would ruin the book sales.

"He offered \$12,000 from the proceeds to either me or my sister or anybody

James wanted if I would go to James and tell him not to call Huie on the stand. Huie told me, 'I control Hanes.'

"I saw James two days later and told him about this. I said 'You oughta get rid of Hanes.' He told me to look around for another lawyer.

"I asked another lawyer, Richard J. Ryan, and he said, 'It's too big for me.' So I decided to call Percy Foreman. I'd read his name a lot. Nobody told me to. He said, 'Tell James to write me a letter asking me to be on the case.'

"But James said he'd rather have a Tennessee lawyer so he could talk to him every day. I called Foreman again. He asked if I had copies of the contracts with Huie. I did. He flew to Memphis. Me and John Ray met him and he said, 'I can break these contracts.'

"He took the case. He has admitted that he was in touch with Attorney General Ramsey Clark all through this time. He wanted James to plead guilty, telling him he would get the death penalty if he didn't. James didn't want to. Foreman wanted me and John to talk him into it. We wouldn't. Two days before the trial, James said he wouldn't plead guilty. The night before, Foreman himself said he didn't think James would plead guilty.

"The judge knew James wanted to fire Foreman but he told him if he did, he would not get any more continuances and would have to use a public defender. The day of the trial, Foreman got up and began to praise the FBI and said there was no conspiracy.



James stood up. Everybody thought he was going to fire Foreman but instead he agreed that he would enter a guilty plea. But he said he would not agree that there was no conspiracy. The next day he wrote a letter asking for a new trial."

James Earl Ray has subsequently filed several motions seeking a new trial. All have been denied.

Jerry Ray visited James Earl Ray in the Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary at Petros, Tenn., four days before his escape. "It's the first time I saw him depressed," he said. "There had been a story that people were trying to get the Assassinations Committee to disband, and that they hadn't learned anything.

"James told me, 'All my appeals have run out. If they abandon the Assassinations Committee, I don't have any hope left. I'll have to get out a different way.'

"When I heard about the escape, I thought either it was legitimate or he was tricked into it. James usually works by himself or with one other person. We were scared he might be killed when he escaped. If he was tricked, he would probably wind up dead. We were thankful one of the prison guards captured him. There are a lot of people who would like to see him silenced."

Jerry Ray has been employed since 1973 as a night watchman at Twin Orchard Country Club in Long Grove, Ill., outside Chicago, but was laid off after his brother's escape "because of the notoriety."

Said Jerry Ray: "Critics are always saying to me, 'Why don't you finally put up or shut up?' But we don't have subpoena power to find out about those telephone numbers. We have given our information to the House assassinations group but it's a one-way street. We tell them what we know, but they won't tell us anything. But one of its members, Walter Fauntroy from Washington, D.C., told me, 'Before this is over, we will solve this case.'

"James is pretty rational about it all. He doesn't make any wild charges. If the FBI or the Justice Department wasn't in on it, he figures, they wouldn't be fighting so hard against having a trial to find out what really happened. He just doesn't know himself."