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# Young on King's Death: 'Martin Had Done

From News Services

**CHICAGO** — U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young says he thought it was a blessing when Dr. Martin Luther King was killed because the civil rights leader had done "all he could" and it was time to "claim his reward."

When King was assassinated, Young said he thought "that he was very fortunate — really that it was a blessing." Young was standing just a few steps from King, his longtime associate, when his friend was shot in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968.

"I know that sounds strange, but we've always viewed death as a blessing. That's been the basis of my life since childhood," Young said in a playboy magazine interview released yesterday.

"Martin had done all that he could. He was misunderstood. He was abused by black and white. . . . God decided Martin had had enough. It

was time to go on home and claim his reward."

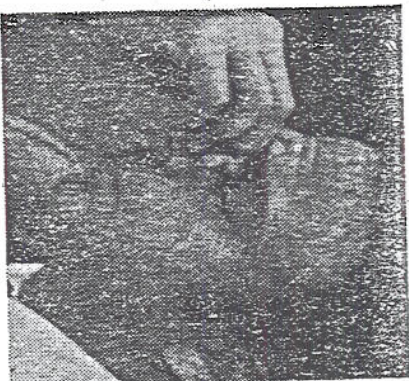
**YOUNG SAID HE** was convinced that more than one person was involved in the assassination.

"When James Earl Ray (the convicted assassin) was caught, he had two passports and he used the wrong one," he said. "A guy who's not smart enough to handle two passports is not smart enough to get two of them by himself."

Young characterized former President Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford as "racists."

He said that everyone in the United States is inevitably tainted to some degree by racism and that his goal is to bring the issue of "ethnocentrism" out in the open and strip it of its "moral stigma."

Nixon and Ford "did not face racism in their lives and tended to rule it out," Young said. "Nixon and Ford



did not face it because they were, in fact, racists."

**ASKED WHETHER** that charge might be too strong, Young said the two Republicans "were racists not in

the aggressive sense but in that they had no understanding of the problems of colored people anywhere."

The former civil rights worker said the "big weakness" of the previous secretary of state, Henry A. Kissinger, was his failure to understand that "racism is one of the most powerful dynamics in the world today."

Speaking of Kissinger's experience as a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, Young said: "I think the horrors of racism in Kissinger's childhood were so terrible that in order to function, he had to put behind him. Otherwise, he would have been so bitter and filled with hate that he never could have done anything."

Young said it was time to "let up" on criticism of the Soviet government's human rights policies.

"Frankly, I've said almost nothing about Soviet dissidents because I

don't know that it helps anything," he said.

"I don't think the Soviet government is, in fact, very concerned about its dissidents," said Young. "Of far more importance are its satellite countries in Eastern Europe. More than President Carter's statements on human rights, Soviet leaders are worried about such things as increases in the budgets of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty — which they do interpret as real attacks on their system and sphere of influence."

Young said the letter of support Carter sent to Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov was "the kind of thing you can do only once, like the (Israeli) raid on Entebbe. You don't try it again. My feeling, in sum, is that it's time to let up on the Soviet Union in this respect."

The ordained minister said he believed "that all men can be saved."

But he added, "I didn't want Hitler to be saved and I don't want (Ugandan President) Idi Amin to be saved. I want him to disappear from the face of the earth. Go home and claim his reward."

In the playboy interview, Young refused to apologize for his open and controversial style of diplomacy.

"Once the Xerox copier developed, private diplomacy died," he said. "There's no such thing as secrecy. It's just a question of whether it's leaked or revealed openly."

"Kissinger tried to use the old diplomacy. But it didn't work for him, either, so he tried selective leaking. Instead of doing that and talking about 'unnamed sources' I simply say that I'm speaking on the record."

# All He Could