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With Ray 230

By KATHRYN JOHNSON

Associated Press Writer

ATLANTA, Ga. AP — Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr., said Monday that James Earl Ray's plea of guilty in the slaying of her husband "cannot be allowed to close the case, to end the search for the many fingers which helped pull the trigger."

Mrs. King said, however, that for her family, "there is a sense of emotional relief" in the sentencing of Ray.

"For the moment, we have been spared a trial which would compel us to relive the fearfully tragic events of his death. But we realize that this is but a respite," she said in a statement.

Mrs. King said that "all concerned people must press the State of Tennessee and the U.S. government to continue until all who are responsible for this crime have been apprehended."

"Not until then," she said, "can the conscience of the nation rest."

Earlier, the Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, who succeeded King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said that Ray's admission of guilt strengthens his belief that there was a conspiracy in King's slaying.

Both Abernathy and Mrs. King reiterated their stand that the death penalty for Ray would be contrary to the moral and religious convictions of King.

"Retribution and vengeance have no place in our beliefs," Mrs. King said.

The Rev. James Orange of SCLC, who was with King when he was slain, said, "I am trying to stay out of this. I think they should set that man free." He declined to elaborate when asked why he felt Ray should be set free, saying he had no further comment.

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