

TUESDAY

RAY SENTENCED TO 99 YEARS**Doubts Aired in King Murder**

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — no conspiracy was linked with the assassination.

The widow of Martin Luther King Jr., says his assassination was the work of more than one person and is still on the conscience of the nation despite the sentencing of James Earl Ray to 99 years in prison.

The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, who took over leadership of Dr. King's civil rights organization, says he is convinced by Ray's admission of guilt itself that the murder was part of a conspiracy.

"There are the unanswered questions," comments author William Bradford Huie, who wrote Ray's biography while Ray was awaiting trial on the murder charge.

BUT WHILE these and other dissenting voices were being heard, Dist. Atty. Philip M. Canale reiterated at a post sentencing interview last night that the state had uncovered no evidence at all of conspiracy.

Canale said the sums of money Ray spent hopping around the United States and Canada and finally to Europe, which seemed to some suspiciously large, probably came from the assassin's own efforts as a smuggler and holdup man.

Ray "got money from several sources," Canale told newsmen, and saved a "fairly substantial sum of money while in prison" in Missouri before the escape which led ultimately to King's death by a rifle bullet on the balcony of a Memphis motel.

CANALE SAID his investigators believed Ray mailed the money out of the prison before he escaped.

Canale added that the investigators believe Ray obtained funds in "one armed robbery and maybe two robberies in Montreal," one in London, and profited by smuggling jewelry and drugs into the United States after his prison break.

Ray's statements in court yesterday confused many who heard them.

AFTER entering his plea of guilty to first-degree murder he stood up and told the judge he disagreed with the theory that

Under questioning by the court, however, Ray said he was still pleading guilty.

After being sentenced, the prisoner was returned to his maximum security cell in the Shelby County jail.

Early today he was secretly taken from his cell and shuttled some 200 miles to the state penitentiary at Nashville to begin serving his 99-year sentence.

A JUSTICE Department spokesman in Washington said Ray's plea of guilty had not closed the books on its original investigation of a possible conspiracy.

In Atlanta, Coretta King, the widow, said Ray's plea of guilty "cannot be allowed to close the case, to end the search for the many fingers which helped pull the trigger."

She added:

"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."

BUT, MRS. KING continued, "All concerned people must press the State of Tennessee and the U.S. government to continue until all who are responsible for this crime are apprehended."

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

"The trial," said Ray's biographer, Huie, "went according to script."

"I'M NOT surprised that Ray got up in court and said what he did about a conspiracy. He's said all along there was another man in the rooming house from which the shot was fired.

"And there are the unanswered questions."

Many Memphis residents expressed relief that Ray's day in court was over.

There had been some apprehension that a prolonged trial might arouse racial feelings in the city and both police and sheriff's deputies had been put on 12-hour shifts.

COMMENTING on the widespread and persistent conspiracy suspicions, Judge W. Preston Battle Jr., of Criminal Court, who presided at the hearing, had this to say:

"While it is not always the case, my 35 years in these criminal courts have convinced me that in the great majority of cases, Hamlet was right when he said: 'For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak with most miraculous organ.'"

The judge said no proof of a conspiracy sufficient to indict anybody but Ray had been found, but noted:

"OF COURSE, this is not conclusive evidence that there was no conspiracy." And he pointed out that "in this state there is no statute of limitations in cap-

ital cases such as this" if evidence turned up against somebody else later.